

STALINISM, HISTORIANS, AND THE NATION:
HISTORY-PRODUCTION UNDER COMMUNISM
IN ROMANIA
(1955-1966)

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Abstract

The present dissertation deals with the writing of history and its role within the system of planned science under communism in Romania. It analyzes the functions and dynamics of the historical front in the regime's politics of knowledge and identity. By means of inquiry on the relationship between personnel, institutions, and policies I study the evolution of the various themes and topics that appeared within the historians' epistemic community and their relationship with the political discourse of the Romanian communist party. I map out the development and features of the gradual hybridization between the historiographical constructions of the Nation and the party's self-definitions and narratives about Romania and its society past, present, and future.

I argue that, between 1955 and 1966, one can identify a wide process of adaptation, organization, control, and synthesis in the politics of science and of history with tremendous, cumulative effects on the political discourse of the communist party. The culmination of these phenomena were the years 1964 and 1965, when the party's political discourse will converge with the historians' own narratives on the subject of collective identity. The present work is an attempt to overcome the binary model of historians versus the party. It does this by taking into account the ecosystem of history-production in Romania, with its specific traditions, ideological conditionings, and strategic positions within a communist polity that constantly avoided reform and persevered in constructing Stalinist civilization. I also pursue a comparative approach trying to see how the Soviet model of planned science and cultural transformation transferred in the

Romanian context and the extent to which some of the dynamics of the local historical front were part of synchronic developments across Eastern Europe.

I conclude that, starting with 1955, the master narrative of Romanian historiography would mature based on the growing symbolic progression of ancestors - kin (*neam*) - people – nation – socialist nation. This process reached its climax into the principle of a unitary, homogeneous, demotic nation that continuously evolved on the road to progress in time. Ultimately, history-production became fundamentally, if not exclusively, preoccupied with reflecting the rebirth of the national being across history with the construction of socialism as final stage. This role was far from unfamiliar for Romanian historians. In pre-communist times, their craft had more often than not taken the form of a national *and* political discipline (if not science).

By 1966, historians had officially regained their pre-1945 function of apostles of the Nation. The evolution and resulting features of history-production from 1955 to 1966 were the outcome of the gradual alignment of scientific personnel and institutions, of scholarship and political discourse, and, ultimately, of ideology along the lines of a re-imagination of the Romanians as a national community under Stalinism. The present dissertation is a tale of how historians fully integrated themselves, acquiring a central role, in the power grid of national Stalinism – the alternative, illiberal modernity advanced by the communist party in Romania.

Acknowledgements

I first started working on the relationship between nationalism and communism in Romania for my BA thesis. I continued on the same topic during my MA studies. For the sake of consistency, I then persisted on this subject once I entered the PhD program at the CEU History Department. Even though the research for the dissertation began more than six years ago, some of the fundamental ideas of the present work have been brewing through my academic endeavors since 2002. I would like to express my gratitude to prof. Herbert J. Ellison, who was the first to open the door to the universe I have been dwelling in for almost a decade. He was also essential in the continuation of my graduate studies, for without his help, in the initial stages, it would have been impossible for me to reach this point. I also consider myself fortunate to have been working closely in the past five years with prof. Vladimir Tismaneanu. He has been a mentor for me always ready to offer advice, help, and assistance in both things scholarly and personal. Working with him allowed my ideas to mature, to evolve to the phase they are in the present dissertation.

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Introduction

A. Preliminary Remarks

In 1955, the Academy of the People's Republic of Romania organized the first party-controlled elections since its creation in 1948. As a result, the number of academicians more than doubled. It would be naïve to believe that in seven years the communist regime had already created its own scientific elite. Then who were these new individuals elected in the institution considered the pinnacle of expert knowledge in the budding socialist order? Where did they come from? Traian Săvulescu, then President of the Academy, had a pretty clear idea about the new situation. In a letter to the RWP general secretary, Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, he labeled them as “people who cannot pronounce words such as socialism, Marxism-Leninism, dialectical materialism, Soviet science.” He went as far as to fret that “I will soon hear ‘mister’ and ‘madam’, as they leave ‘comrade’ aside.” The past with its people and traditions was coming back and, ironically, by party design. But Săvulescu also knew what was needed: “I persistently asked to be helped by the party. We must immediately put together a Party Committee headed by a prestigious academician. This way we will be able to intervene among academicians by means of the party. They will know *at any given time* that they have not entered into an empty house.” In the Academy, the party had to lead rather than “follow behind those without party.”¹ In 1955, the present had opened to the past but it also greatly feared contamination from it.

¹ „Scrisoarea Acad. Traian Săvulescu către tov. Gheorghe Gheorghiu Dej”, 31 octombrie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.132/1955, ff. 22-23.

In 1965, a report by the communist party's Central Committee Section for Science and the Arts reported that 75 percent of the directors and deputy directors of the Academy's units were party members. Most of these leaders of the scientific front, the area where epistemic communities contributed to the struggle for the socialist revolution, were either elected in or promoted after 1955. The present seemed to have successfully contained the potential impurities of the past. However, a year later, at the Centennial of the Academy, the new general secretary of the communist party, Nicolae Ceaușescu, proudly proclaimed: "We fervently honor today all those who, throughout the years, in placing their energy, talent, and creative strength in the service of the Motherland, for the future of our nation, have built, by arduous and enthusiastic work, the lasting edifice of the Romanian people's culture."² In little more than a decade, the socialist present had developed a common ground in its relationship with the past. Containment became co-existence. From 1955 to 1966, the communist experience in Romania underwent a gradual metamorphosis. It found deeper and stronger continuities with pre-1945 times rather than merely staking its legitimacy fundamentally on discontinuities. The further the party looked into the future, the wider was the regression into the past.

How and Why did this happen? Who were the agents of change? Which were the conditionings of the process? What consequences did it have on the outlook of the communist experience in Romania? What does this phenomenon tell us about the recent history of Romania? The present dissertation attempts to answer to these questions by analysis of the writing of history under communism in Romania. Most of the literature about this topic often falls into the trap of a binary explanatory model – party versus scholars; Soviet/communist versus national; patriot/good versus party historians/hacks; manipulation/instrumentalization versus

² Nicolae Ceaușescu, „Cuvânt de salut la sesiunea solemnă consacrată sărbătorii centenarului Academiei R.S.R.”, p. 32, http://www.cnsas.ro/documente/istoria_comunism/

emancipation. The socialist present and the pre-communist past ceased to exist as an antinomy after 1955. They essentially interacted on the basis of interpenetration. The year 1955 was the beginning of a cumulative process of syncretism in the regime politics of science. It had its twists and turns and it was by no means inevitable. But it ultimately generated the vision of a *national* science working “for Romania’s continuous progress, for its elevation to the highest peaks of human civilization.”³

Between the party and science/scientists there were institutions, persons, traditions, varying alignments of power and prestige, and important external influences. Subsequently, it is very difficult to draw a demarcation line between the two. Any binary model of analysis inherently obliterates the complexities of a wide system of control, co-option, negotiation, mutual influence, and ultimately of systemic reproduction. This is why the study of history, as discipline and profession, under communism is important. In Romania, history relied on several presuppositions with crucial impact on the functioning of the communist regime: a) history was *science* – by method of historical materialism it was subject to laws and the facts and findings it produced had a truth value equivalent to that of the natural sciences; b) in being a science, history could be *planned* according to the priorities, necessities, direction, and rhythm of building socialism in one country; c) history was vitally about *identity*, it constructed the mirror of the society it was written in. Under the circumstances, the writing of history in Romania was the *production of veracities* about the collective revolutionary self. For example, in 1965, history was defined as the most human of all sciences because it enlarged life from “the immense vantage point of the past and through its anticipation of an endless future.”⁴ It was conceived as a

³ *Idem*, p.32.

⁴ N. Adăniloae, „Nicolae Iorga – Istoric al războiului pentru independență națională”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, „25 de ani de la moartea lui Nicolae Iorga”, nr.5, anul XVIII, 1965, pp. 1394. Adăniloae formulated this definition by

means to innumerable potentialities of refining the present, of circumscribing it according the projected image of a radically future-oriented human collectivity (i.e., Romanian society under communism) by way of potentially unrestricted employment of the past.

Under the circumstances, the study of the writing of history under communism offers multiple advantages: first, it allows for insight within the evolution of a discipline in close relation to the party line. At the same time it can reveal the institutional and personnel dynamics of research and higher education in the new regime. Second, it gives the researcher the opportunity to observe not only which were the party's politics of identity, but also what was the role of expert knowledge in their reformulation or refinement. And third, it brings to view the manner in which a *modus vivendi* between past and present affected the self-perception and self-definition of the regime itself. To put it simply, in Romania, history always remained in between science and ideology, having to be both at the same time while preserving a certain level of autonomy. It therefore can simultaneously tell the story of the politics of expert knowledge and their impact on the past-present-future continuum as constructed by the party in correlation with a national community.

B. Hypotheses

Under communism, history was part of the system of planned science. This crucial fact has been if not ignored, at least treated lightly by the existing literature on the writing of history in Romania. What this fact implies is that the study of the topic cannot be approached only from the point of view of its discursive setting or of the limited interactions of a selected number of significant individuals. A full picture requires that texts, themes, and persons to be integrated

piecing together two statements of N. Iorga, the most important Romanian historian, who was active at the end of the 19th century until 1940, when he was assassinated by the Iron Guard, the Romanian fascist movement.

into the intricate institutional network created by the regime in order to organize and control the epistemic communities and their output. Consequently, one of the hypotheses of this dissertation is that, under communism, history writing became a type of production that was quantified and projected according to a plan (at least in theory) and which had to go through a complex assembly line of institutions, decision-makers, debates, re-writings, and (un)repressed traditions.

Moreover, in order to properly understand the productive process one needs to distinguish the pecking order of the politics of science within the regime: from the Academy, one has to go to the history institutes/departments, from there to megaprojects of the discipline, its localized debates, or individual thematic initiatives. The overarching authority remains the party through its various sections or departments of the Central Committee. The Ministry of Education came into play as well, particularly on matters of higher education. These structured interactions are always altered by personnel dynamics (who are the historians, what is their position in the system, what is their background, what is their relationship with party-state representatives) and by the persistence of tradition (Which and how it survives? What is rehabilitated and how?) Once this “social contexts”⁵ are mapped out, the discursive settings developed within them can be fully understood.

An additional presupposition develops from this hypothesis: the writing of history under communism is a discourse essentially and inextricably conditioned by the identities (institutional and personal) that co-exist and interact within the system of planned science. To put it differently, history-production cannot be situated outside the conditionings of the party-state

⁵ The statements that follow are my own development of Iordachi's and Trencsenyi's observation that “to understand “social conditions,” we *textualize* them and study them in their discursive setting, while the discourses are *contextualized* in view of their social frameworks.” See Constantin Iordachi and Balázs Trencsényi, “In Search of a Usable Past: The Question of National Identity in Romanian Studies, 1990-2000,” *East European Politics and Societies* 2003 17: 452.

machinery organizing expert knowledge. Even non-planned output was the result of this social context, either because of systemic failure or because of mechanisms of aversion (e.g., altering the plan mid-way through the year, obtaining an alternative route to getting an official stamp for publication of one's work). Regardless of its nature, any form of history-production needed an official label in order to be recognized.

At the same time, I also claim that history-production crucially affected the social-political context that it textualized. The results of the debates about various issues about the history of Romania materialized in articles, monographs, syntheses, and even party documents. In their turn, these had a fundamental impact on future dynamics within the epistemic community, on its relationship with party-state institutions and decision-makers, and ultimately on the definition of the polity itself. Officially formulated positions about themes, about the discipline, and collective identity had the potential of altering the outlook and motivations of the entire institutional-human-ideological context that sustained history-production. By consequence, I argue that discursive settings themselves influenced the future identity of the environment they are produced in. More precisely, in the case of the writing of history in Romania, to paraphrase Katherine Verdery, the gradual increase in the intensity and institutionalization of the language of national identity between 1957 and 1963, contributed much to its symbolic force and proliferation, both in political discourse and in academic narratives, starting with 1964.⁶ Additionally, the stories of identity had a fundamentally clustered

⁶ Katherine Verdery, *National Ideology under Socialism: Identity and Cultural Politics in Ceaușescu's Romania* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), p. 99. When Verdery refers to "earlier years" she means the pre-communist period. I adapted her thesis, arguing that one cannot presuppose a desert between pre-1945 and 1965 in the employment of the Nation in cultural discourses. I contend that pre-communist traditions and practices were gradually brought back after 1955, such rehabilitation culminating in its official insertion into the Romanian Communist Party's political discourse starting with 1965.

nature because of the system of planned science that they functioned in. They built upon each other as they became officialized by way of political and academic validation.

Here I reach the central thesis of this dissertation. The Nation did not appear out the blue in Romanian history production and in communist political discourse. It also did not resurface only because of this mater symbol's long tradition in the politics of culture of the modern Romanian state. Moreover, national-identity centered history was not simply the result of vanquishing schools of falsification only to be later instrumentalized and discursively perverted by the party. On the contrary, the Nation was written back into history, step by step, by certain individuals, because of particular policies, and through specific institutions by means of accommodation with the ideological requirements of the party system of controlled and planned expert knowledge. Therefore, a master-narrative about the Nation could only be the result of a permanent flux of mutual interactions and influences between, on the one hand, the self-perceived identity of the scientific community, its traditions of epistemic practice, its personnel dynamics, and its continuously changing position within the system of planned science; and, on the other hand, the nature of the ideology defining the political regime it existed in, its propensities toward the essentialization of identity, its self-perceived domestic and international position, and its totalizing projects of social, cultural, and economic transformation.

Following Nikolai Krementsov, my claim is that history writing was the result of an essentially symbiotic relationship between the scientific community and the party-state agencies.⁷ And, the production of knowledge was therefore the expression of the initiatives,

⁷ Krementsov stated that “the critical feature of the Stalinist science system was the total dependence of science on state funding, which led to the coevolution and convergence of its two components—the party-state agencies and the scientific community - and to the development of a close and symbiotic relationship between them.” See Nikolai Krementsov, *Stalinist Science* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997), p. 287. I argue that state support was an indeed an essential conditioning for history-production, but the symbiotic relationship between historians and

responses, and realignments to the policies of the party authorities. However, the latter's own decision-making was changing according to the potentialities that such an output offered for purposes of regime re-invention in the shifting environment of world communism (i.e., Soviet bloc).⁸ Sometimes historians anticipated the party line, providing a reservoir of potentialities in terms of ideological re-invention.

The narrative about the collective identity of the socialist society was invariably embedded by and into the writing of history. It thus gave historians a central position in the party-state's economy of symbolic capital. However, considering that this story became more and more Nation-centered, history-production entered a double-bind: the duty of conformity to the party line combined with the national mission that historians took on primarily as consequence of a self-understanding based on domestic historiographic and academic traditions. In its turn, this double-bind overlapped with a sense of national belonging, growing in counter-distinction with the Soviet hegemon within the party leadership and ranks. The end result was the specificity of both regime identity and history production under circumstances of building socialism in one country. To paraphrase John Connelly, though policies and institutions were similar as in other countries of the socialist camp, the people who operated within them along with pre-existing and developing milieus produced the variations that define the Romanian case.⁹

the regime also depended on the common ground reached by individual actors and particular institutions from either side. The profile of the epistemic community itself combined with its pecuniary support and party validation were the three vital factors characterizing the evolution of this symbiotic relationship. As the Roller case will later show, the ability to claim equal and greater epistemic relevance in relation to the priorities set up by the party line determined a re-arrangement of capital (material and symbolic) and of positions within the community of the historians. Roller's demise was not primarily caused by struggle over resources, but by other historians' ability to better translate their agenda according to party objectives.

⁸ Aleksander Kojevnik rightly remarked that Power (the party) could not rule without relying on science, while science could not be independent from power. See Alexei B. Kojevnikov, *Stalin's Great Science. The Times and Adventures of Soviet Physicists* (London: Imperial College Press, 2004)

⁹ John Connelly, *Captive Universities. The Sovietization of East German, Czech, and Polish Higher Education 1945-1956* (Chapel Hill/London: The University of North Carolina Press, 2000), pp. 2-3.

C. Methodology, Periodization, Sources

In order to be able to pursue the hypotheses of my study, I structured the research on three trajectories: policies, institutions, and personnel; themes, methods and traditions of historical writing; and the political history of Romanian communism with a focus on its ideological trappings. Most of my analytical framework for the first trajectory is founded upon the literature that deals with the characteristics and evolution of the system of planned science and with the policies of higher education in the Soviet Union. Two central elements of my argumentation originate from this scholarship: the central role of the Academy in the politics of science under communism¹⁰ and the concept of cultural revolution as a project of constructing new knowledge elites and of adjusting symbolic horizons in accordance with the party line.¹¹ This literature allowed me to develop a clear image of the institutional frameworks and typologies of epistemic dynamics in the organization of Soviet science, which I could then apply and test for the Romanian case. At the same time, I also adopted Michael David-Fox's understanding of the cultural revolution as a long-term "dynamic of revolutionary assault and self-limiting *volte-face*, spurred on by pursuit of conflict-laden social, ideological, and modernizing missions and practices."¹² However, despite the fact that I started from the premise that the evolution of history-production was pre-determined by the implementation in Romania of the Soviet blueprint for planned science and cultural revolution, I did not focus only on the

¹⁰ I used the writings of authors such as Alexander Vucinich, Vera Tolz, Michael David-Fox, Loren Graham, Nikolai Kremmentsov, Alexander Kojevnikov, David Joravsky, etc.

¹¹ I consider that the fundamental contributions to this concept were made by Sheila Fitzpatrick and Michael David-Fox.

¹² Michael David-Fox, "The Assault on the Universities and the Dynamics of Stalin's 'Great Break,' 1928-1932," in Michael David-Fox and György Péteri, *Academia in Upheaval – Origins, Transfers, and Transformations of the Communist Academic Regime in Russia and East Central Europe* (Wesport, Connecticut/London: Bergin & Garvey, 2000), p. 97.

“Moscow center”. I also looked at other countries of Eastern Europe in order to understand the extent to which their situation differed or was similar from that of Romania.¹³

An inevitable topic here was that of the meaning of the concept of “Sovietization.” Rather than perceiving the latter as simply the transplantation or imposition of a set of policies that transformed satellite states or, in my case, the organization of science (i.e., historical studies), I preferred to understand it in the form of a civilizational transfer. Developing Stephen Kotkin’s approach, I considered that Sovietization did not only bring new institutions or a new ideology, it brought a new civilization – Stalinism. The latter had “its own Enlightenment ethos of scientific social engineering with the accompanying modern practices of government mixed with a theocratic party-state structure”, “a quasi-religious system of dogma” (Marxism-Leninism), and “the claim to its own language (Bolshevism).”¹⁴ It also brought a particular understanding of world history (“capitalist encirclement”, “two camp theory”, “touchstone theory”) that would then have a lasting impact on later self-perceptions of the domestic communist regime. Nevertheless, I do not see Sovietization as a one way process. E. A. Rees rightly remarked that “the Soviet model implanted in the satellite states acquired, in some cases, a life of its own.”¹⁵ Moreover, John Connelly employed the term “self-Sovietization” in trying to explain the fact that the Eastern Europeans sometimes adapted and used Soviet models without

¹³ I greatly benefited from John Connelly’s and Gyorgy Peteri’s contributions either as individual or edited volumes.

¹⁴ Stephen Kotkin, *The Magnetic Mountain* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), pp. 225-237; Stephen Kotkin, “1991 and the Russian Revolution: Sources, Conceptual Categories, Analytical Frameworks”, *The Journal of Modern History*, vol. 70, no. 2 (Jun., 1998), pp. 384-425 and “The State – Is it us? Memoirs, Archives, and Kremlinologists”, *Russian Review*, 61 (January 2002), pp. 35-51. For further commentary of this view see also Astrid Hadin, “Stalinism as a Civilization: New Perspectives on Communist Regimes”, *Political Studies Review*, 2004, vol. 2, 166-184.

¹⁵ E. A. Rees, “Introduction: The Sovietization of Eastern Europe” in Balazs Apor, Peter Apor, and A. E. Rees, *The Sovietization of Eastern Europe: New Perspectives on the Postwar Period* (Washington DC: New Academia Publishin, 2008), p. 25. In the same volume also see Tarik Cyril Amar, “Sovietization as a Civilizing Mission in the West”, pp. 29-45. Another recent contribution to the debate on the nature of Sovietization is Vladimir Tismaneanu (ed.), *Stalinism Revisited. The Establishment of Communist Regimes in East-Central Europe* (Budapest/New York: Central European Press, 2009)

direction instruction and coercion.¹⁶ I think that the evolution of the system of planned science in Romania reveals that this process was not limited to the period of “revolutionary breakthrough” (Kenneth Jowitt), that is, 1945-1954. The reorganization of higher-education and research in Romania in the mid-sixties and early seventies brings to light the continuation of the process of self-Sovietization.

At the same time, my analysis of history-production in Romania under communism also relied on the findings on this subject in the case of both the Soviet Union and other Eastern European countries. The starting premise is, of course, that Sovietization also brought the transfer of a Soviet historiographical model in the epistemic field. However, my claim is that one needs to distinguish between two trends in this model: the first, typical of the early years of Bolshevism in power, represented by the so called “Pokrovsky school”.¹⁷ The latter found in Romania a counterpart in Mihail Roller’s activity on the historical front. Just like in the Soviet Union, when Pokrovsky was associated, by mid-1930s, with vulgar sociology, Roller would fall under similar accusations. Therefore, I want to point to a second trend, what Roger Markwick called the “*Short Course* paradigm”, which by 1942 was fully arguing for a *positive and inclusive* “partiinost-history”.¹⁸ What one needs to take from this second development is that role of the political in historiography became that of allowing for extensiveness of historical interpretation within the prescribed methodological and ideological limits. The re-enchantment

¹⁶ John Connelly, *Capitve Universities*, p. 45. Also see Norman Naimark, “The Sovietization of Eastern Europe” in Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad, *The Cambridge History of the Cold War. Volume I. Origins* (Cambridge: Cambridge university Press, 2010), pp. 195-197.

¹⁷ George M. Enten, *The Soviet Scholar-Bureaucrat: M. N. Pokrovskii and the Society of Marxist Historians* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1978) and John Barber, *Soviet Historians in Crisis, 1928-1932* (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, Inc., 1981).

¹⁸ Roger D. Markwick, *Rewriting History in Soviet Russia – the Politics of Revisionist Historiography, 1954-1974*, foreword by Donald J. Raleigh, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001).

with the past thus became possible in contrast to Pokrovsky's initial idea of a 'revolutionary' writing of history.

Furthermore, considering the timeframe of this dissertation one also has to take into account post-1953 developments in Soviet history-production. Markwick and Nancy Heer showed how increased professionalization of the epistemic field combined with de-Stalinization in order to create the possibility of further methodological and thematic innovation – a moving away from the “one textbook paradigm.”¹⁹ Both of these authors though tell a story of arrested development, as historiographical orthodoxy more often than not ultimately gained the upper hand. Additionally, studies about historiographical revisionism in the Soviet Union after the death of Stalin focus predominantly on party history. Considering that my dissertation concentrates on the historical encoding of the Nation, I also relied on comparison with cases Eastern Europe where I could identify comparable developments of revisionism in national history.²⁰ Overall, however, what I consider the essential lesson from the literature on Soviet history-production is the poverty of understanding the historians' activity and the evolution of the historical front along the line of them becoming “handmaidens of political authority.” In this reading, the epistemic community merely mirrored the “totalitarian reality”.

For example, in the introduction to his book, “Russian Historians and the Soviet State”, Konstantin F. Shteppa justified his approach as follows:

¹⁹ Nancy Heer, *Politics and History in the Soviet Union* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1971) and George M. Enteen, Tatiana Gorn, and Cheryl Kern, *Soviet Historians and the Study of Russian Imperialism* (University Park/London: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1979).

²⁰ For example see Maciej Gorny, “Marxist History of Historiography in Poland, Czechoslovakia, and East Germany (late 1940s-late 1960s),” in Balazs Apor, Peter Apor, and A. E. Rees, *The Sovietization of Eastern Europe...*, pp. 249-263 or by the same author “Past in the Future. National Tradition and Czechoslovak Marxist Historiography”, *European Review of History—Revue européenne d'Histoire*, Vol. 10, No. 1, 2003, pp. 103-114. Also see Martin Sabrow, “Dictatorship as Discourse: Cultural Perspectives on SED Legitimacy” in Konrad H. Jarausch (ed.), *Dictatorship as Experience: Towards a Socio-Cultural History of the GDR*, translated by Eve Duffy, (New York: Berghahn Books, 2004), pp. 195-211.

the development of historical knowledge and historical thought in the Soviet Union is of less interest to us than what is termed the 'historical front'. A front presupposes a struggle, and what interests us most is the political struggle over scholarship in history that has been going in the USSR since the beginning of the Soviet system. From this point of view Soviet historians are not so much *subject* as *object* [my emphasis], less participants than weapons, in the struggle. On the other hand, this struggle is carried on in part by their efforts and with their participation. In the final analysis, *the struggle finds expression in their scholarship and in their teaching* [my emphasis].²¹

Such statement overlooks entirely the ambivalence and de-synchronization which can characterize the relationship between historians and the party ideologues, the institutional structures of planned science that condition history-production, the relationship between the writing of history and the shifts in party line, or any other source of *ambiguity* in the functioning of a communist regime's politics of knowledge. Another similar position regarding history production was taken by Alter L. Litvin: "in the Stalin era the Party-state's total control of archives, journals, publishing houses, historians' appointments and so on meant that scholarship was entirely subordinate to its whims and dictates: history was the *handmaiden of ideology and politics* [my emphasis]."²² This remark speaks more of the nature of the political environment in the Soviet Union rather than discussing the nature of the dynamics of historical-production in the country.

Interestingly enough, these types of studies loudly assert the immutable state of historiography but they simultaneously apply a continuous, evolutionary analysis to the field. That is, this type of argument is locked into contradiction: it talks about the dynamics of a non-dynamic field. The handmaiden/mirror explanatory model of history-production fails its own methodology – the unitary political field does not reflect into a unitary historical scholarship. Soviet history-production had a palimpsestic nature: it was a complex of clustered scientific

²¹ Konstantin F. Shtepa, *Russian Historians and the Soviet State*, (New Brunswick/New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1957, 1962), pp. xii.

²² Alter L. Litvin, *Writing History in Twentieth-Century Russia – A View from Within*, transl. and ed. by John L.H. Keep, (Houndmills; New York: Palgrave, 2001), pp. 11-12.

research alternatively losing or gaining preeminence according to their authors' positioning in relation to the existing restrictions upon admissible puzzle-solutions²³ and/or models. The dynamics of the history-production relied heavily upon the norms, policies, traditions, institutional layouts, and personal relations regulating the scientific practice and milieus that ultimately gave the specific profile to the Soviet historical field.

In what concerns the Romanian case, the literature on the institutions, policies, and personnel of the new system of planned science is rather descriptive of the historical events themselves. There is scarce interpretation and comparison from the point of view of the model that was transferred, its functions, or the specificities of Sovietization in Romania. Most importantly, there is little carry-over of analysis from 1955 onwards. There are however several studies that helped me map the sequence of the events, the personnel changes, and the connections with party leadership (until 1956).²⁴ I believe that the present dissertation is the first study that deals with the creation and evolution of the Romanian Academy, of the system of planned science, and of its particular phenomenon, the historical front, from the point of view of the comparison with the Soviet model, while at the same time trying to situate the country's tendencies within the general framework of Eastern Europe. Moreover, if one is to look at a deeper layer of research, the triad Academy-historians-party, there is little sensibility, in existing literature, to the interplay between institutional dynamics, party-state policies, historiographical agendas, and the profile of the epistemic community itself. History-production is either isolated as *only* discursive practice (Andi Mihalache) or it is perceived as the result of party versus

²³ According to Thomas Kuhn, puzzles are "that special category of problems that can serve to test ingenuity or skill in solution" in a particular science. For history production in Romania under communism, a puzzle can be considered the topic of the formation of the Romanian people and language. See Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, second edition, enlarged (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), p. 36.

²⁴ I am referring to authors such as Dorin Rusu, Dan Berindei, or the contributions on the Sovietization of science and higher education in *Analele Sighet*.

historians dyad (Florin Muller, Vlad Georgescu, Ioan Opris). There are several articles written on the topic either in English or in Romanian where history writing is merely seen as the result of waves of repression, emancipation, and instrumentalization.²⁵ Despite of many authors acknowledgement that history was part of the party controlled research system of the Academy, there haven't been attempts to explore and understand the relationship between the party-state institutional structures and the writing of history under communism in Romania.

However, the above mentioned literature along with the memoirs published by various Romanian historians or important academicians²⁶ were of immense help for the second trajectory of my approach (themes, methods and traditions of historical writing). Though sometimes unreliable, these volumes, especially the memoirs, allow for a fascinating look into the complex personal dynamics between historians/scientists, the party institutions of control and propaganda and their leaders/ideologues, the Academy's environment, the organization of history-production, and the ethos or priorities of the epistemic community itself. Each of these volumes unveils a universe founded upon a myriad of interactions, conditionings, traditions, and agendas. Despite the fact that throughout the dissertation I preferred to employ the term "historical front" in order to express the politics of mobilization and the ideological commitment inherent to the writing of history under communism, I believe that Katherina Clark's concept of ecosystem can excellently describe the dichotomy between continuity and change within the historians' community. According to Clark, "ideological formations in the system act as constraints on any extrahistorical agendas the revolution's agents might have. Yet the rhetoric of "revolution" assumes that the ecosystem is malleable. The frames of reference are largely inherited, although

²⁵ The most high profile authors here are Keith Hitchens and Șerban Papacostea.

²⁶ For example, C. C. Giurescu, Florin Constantiniu, Dinu C. Giurescu, Apostol Stan, Iorgu Iordan, Gh. Zane, etc.

the ones that prevail in the new conditions may not be those that were dominant under the old order.”²⁷

This conceptualization presupposes a “punctuated evolution” in which formative moments tended to be not only moments of rupture²⁸, but also “the intervening years of adaptation and consolidation as the surviving flora and fauna responded to the new conditions; some came to dominate, others not, and others again generated mutations.”²⁹ For the case of Romanian writing of history, I will show how, between 1955 and 1966, the moments of upheaval (purges among intellectuals, red experts, or within higher-education) were part of a larger process of adaptation, organization, control, and synthesis in the politics of science and of history with tremendous, cumulative effects on the political discourse of the communist party. The culmination of these developments were the years 1964-1965, when the party’s political discourse will converge with the historians’ own narratives on the subject of collective identity. In other words, I contend that the emergence of the Nation as the master symbol of politics and historiography was the result of a “punctuated evolution” of structures, policies, themes, and personnel.

My last remark can also be used as a starting point in explaining the periodization I employed in my research. For most of the authors dealing with the historical front, the period of

²⁷ Katerina Clark, *Petersburg: Crucible of Cultural Revolution* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1995), p. ix.

²⁸ G. Peteri argued that ruptures in the evolution of the politics of science “did not always mean discontinuity, nor did they bring with them, inevitably and finally, the end of all professionalism, the *sortie* for decent academic standards form university, and the unconditional triumph of political—ideological controls”. See György Péteri, “The Communist Idea of the University: An Essay Inspired by the Hungarian Experience,” in John Connelly and Michael Grütter (eds.), *Universities under Dictatorship* (University Park, Penn.: The Pennsylvania University State University Press, 2005), pp. 156. In my dissertation I argue that the rupture of 1948 did not only mean the regimentation of scientific activity, and for that matter of historians, to the party, but also the survival of certain traditions that will resurface once the historical front will realign in 1955. Also, the historians who became prominent from 1956 onwards, learnt their first lessons in being communist during these earlier years.

²⁹ Clark, *Peterburg*, p. x

time starting with 1955 and ending with 1960 (or 1962 in some cases) is either perceived in terms of a totalistic control over history production or as an alternation between thaw and repression. Generally speaking, the classical periodization is the one proposed by Vlad Georgescu, where the period from 1944 to 1960 is labeled as “‘the historical front’ decides the truth”. Three other authors developed upon his approach. The first is Alexandru Zub who split Georgescu’s timeframe in two: 1945-1948, when historiography reflected the confusion and quick sands of the period of communist takeover; and, 1948-1960, when extremely severe ideological limitations were imposed leading to serious scholarly distortions. The second is Andi Mihalache, who preferred three stages: 1948-1953 the time of the great disruptions; 1955-1957, re-evaluations in the context of the thaw; and, 1958-1962, the new ideological rigorism and the comeback of old clichés. And third, Florin Constantiniu who proposed his own four distinct periods: 1944 to 1947, which is characterized by pluralism because of the activity of ‘the old professors’; 1948 to 1953, the dominance of Mihai Roller, who imposes a “primitive and aggressive Marxism aimed at the Sovietization of Romanian historiography”; 1953 to 1956, the thaw and Stalin’s death; 1956 to 1958 the forceful return of Stalinist dogmatism; and, from 1959 onward the development of national communism.³⁰

The arguments used by these four authors to justify their characterizations of the developments within the historical front (1955 to 1962) are mostly relying on thematic debates within the field and on the official policies of the regime toward it. However, the problem with these approaches is that they presuppose the possibility of a clear-cut separation of scholarly

³⁰ Vlad Georgescu, *Politică și istorie. Cazul comuniștilor români* (București: Humanitas, 2008). This is the fourth edition in Romanian, the first two were published in 1981 and 1983 at Jon Dumitrescu-Verlag in Munchen, while the third in 1991 at Humanitas. See also Al. Zub, *Orizont Închis. Istorografia română sub dictatură* (Iași: Institutul European, 2000), p. 171; Andi Mihalache, *Istorie și practice discursive în România “democrat-populară”* (București: Editura Albatros, 2003); Florin Constantiniu *De la Răutu și Roller la Mușat și Ardeleanu* (București: Editura Enciclopedică, 2007), pp. 227

dynamics and political-ideological trends from one year to the other. Nevertheless, all of the authors who dealt with the Romania historical front have faced the same problem: the porousness of the topic in relation with distinctive timeframes. Constantiniu's periodization is most indicative of this dilemma: why split a historical period of development on an almost year by year basis, when both trends of continuity and discontinuity can be identified throughout?

My argument is that the period 1955 and 1963 should be approached as a continuous timeframe that is essentially defined by ambiguity and synthesis. During these years, the politics of history and the system of planned science were cumulatively developed rather than being formed by means of upheavals³¹. Most of the policies adopted by the regime on these matters built upon each other toward greater rationalization and planning of knowledge production. The most important projects of these years were finalized by 1963 or 1964. Two examples suffice: on the historical front, the treatise of national history was first announced in 1955; from then on historians and the party representatives (i.e., the Department of Propaganda and Culture) experienced rich interpenetration that ultimately resulted in the publication between 1960 and 1964 of four volumes. Or, since 1958, there were debates both within the Academy and within the party about the best way to better coordinate and unify scientific research. After several proposals, the final outcome was the creation in December 1965 of the National Council for Scientific Research. However, I separate 1964 to 1966, because on the basis of the previous years' continuities, novel elements came into play, particularly, a fundamental change in the

³¹ Michael David-Fox warned that the concept of "cultural upheaval is a crucial phenomenon but a very blunt conceptual tool". He then continued saying that "in the midst of upheaval, even as all cultural actors had little choice but to adapt to radically changed circumstances, old battles and divisions persisted underneath the surface of a waxing Stalinist *Gleichschaltung*, which itself cracked open after 1953." See Michael David-Fox, "Cultural Memory in the Century of Upheaval: Big Pictures and Snapshots", *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History*, Volume 2, Number 3, Summer 2001 (New Series), p. 603 and pp. 607-608.

party's political discourse or the official ascription of tradition within specific scholarly orthodoxies.

Moreover, the periodization 1955-1963 and 1964-1966 also takes into consideration the 'big' election years within the Academy. These were the moments when a status-quo was officialized within the regime's politics of science. In 1955, it was the first time when the regime manifested a more inclusive, syncretic attitude toward expert knowledge. In 1963, the champions of the projects of planned science accomplished in the previous years were awarded positions of academicians. Between 1964 and 1966, the Academy's membership will reflect both the nationalizing policies of the regime as well as its interest in alternative geographies of science. Another advantage of this approach is that it also takes into account some of the most important and lasting turning points in the Romanian communists' party line: on the one hand, the 1955 the RWP's Second Congress, the 1961 November-December Plenum (when the first attempts for a national history of the party appear), and the 1962 the completion of the construction of socialism's foundations in Romania. On the other hand, there is the April 1964 Declaration that officially situated the RWP's position within the framework of self-determination, both internally and externally; and, in 1965, the RCP's IXth Congress that set the foundation for the main directions of Romanian communism's future developments. Last but not least, I want to add that any periodization is conventional, including my own, for one cannot use it in order to ignore the fact that certain developments go beyond arbitrary temporal limitations. This is most obvious in the dissertation when I deal with the politics of socialist integration of science versus the projects of an alternative geography of science. The first signs of these policies appeared since 1958 (in the case of the project of Southeastern European studies even earlier) and they reached full circle only in 1966, thus cutting across the time frame that I am proposing.

Returning to the second trajectory of my research (themes, methods, traditions) there are three other categories of literature that I took into account: the analysis of the communist regimes' politics of culture; the studies of Romanian history of historiography (some of them published before 1989)³²; studies about Romanian intellectual history and of the modern state's politics of culture and identity in the 19th and the 20th centuries.³³ The developments within the writing of history and of the ensuing stories of identity under communism cannot be fully understood without a genealogical approach to how the community of historians' defined itself, its craft, and its role in society before 1945. Moreover, such an exploration also reveals the constants of historical discourse about national identity, the thematic traditions that survived the historical caesura of 1945.

Another hypothesis of my dissertation is that the communist regime's program of political, illiberal modernity (focused on overcoming backwardness by means of industrialization, collectivization, urbanization, mass education, etc.) relied on principles that were not foreign to Romanian epistemic communities. Historians themselves, before 1945, had often times insisted on the necessity of socio-political solidarity, national unity, structural reform, social emancipation, Enlightenment of the masses, and even radical political revolution. On the latter point, I show, in various chapters, the fact that scores of historians were members or

³² Two authors have made most impact over this field: before 1989 (less after) Al. Zub, whose monographs and syntheses about the dynamics of the writing of history in Romania until 1945 constitute a fundamental tool in understanding both the traditions of Romanian historiography and its obsessions as they were transferred into the communist period. Zub's work can be considered simultaneously a secondary and primary source. The second author is of course Lucian Boia who basically revolutionized the field of the study of national narratives in Romania's modern and contemporary history. At the same time, I consider Lucian Natasa's volumes on the history of academic elites and epistemic communities from the second half of the 19th century to 1945 essential in properly mapping out the institutional characteristics and the practices of the system of higher-education and research in pre-communism Romania.

³³ Here the literature is overwhelming, especially that there was a boom in the scholarship on the interwar period, particularly the 1930s. For my research, the most relevant contributions those of authors such as Zigu Ornea, Irina Livezeanu, Marta Petreu, Florin Ţurcanu, Sorin Alexandrescu, Marius Turda, Amir Heinen, Iordan Chimet, Eugen Weber, etc.

sympathizers with the Iron Guard, or they joined in the corporatist project of Carol II's dictatorship, or took part in the propaganda apparatus of the Antonescu regime. Once the past was again used in order to justify present policies or imaginations of the collective self in a national context, traditional themes, obsessions, and methods of Romanian historiography came back into the mainstream of accepted discourse. At the same time, one often overlooked aspect of the system of planned science imposed by the communist regime is that the latter's centralization, funding, and rationalization of scientific production did represent, to a certain extent, a continuation from the pre-1945 tendencies.

For example, in 1926, in an overview of two decades of historiography, Romanian historian C. C. Giurescu, a crucial actor of history-production after 1965, argued that "science has reached so far in its investigations, its critical level is so elevated, and the goals that it aims to are so grandiose, that one energy is not enough in order to accomplish them. Science had become today an act of human solidarity."³⁴ The interwar period witnessed increasing calls for writing history in collectives. Unsurprisingly, more and more institutes of specialized studies appeared until the beginning of the Second World War. Additionally, in 1942-1943, all the institutes of history in Romania were reorganized, each of them becoming "a university directorate (*direcție universitară*)" with direct funding and control from the state. A couple years earlier, in the context of territorial losses caused by the Nazi-Soviet pact and the Vienna Diktat, there were initiatives among Romanian historians for greater centralization and state involvement with the purpose of better putting history at use for the national and political

³⁴ Alexandru Zub, *De la istorie critică la criticism. Istoriografia română la finele secolului XIX și începutul secolului XX* (București: Editura Academiei RSR, 1985), p. 21.

priorities of Romania.³⁵ Of course, what happened after 1948 was not that much in the mind of pre-1945 historians, but once the system of planned science became national, epistemic communities increasingly perceived themselves working for the sake of the Nation. So, both institutionally and thematically tradition did have a potential for further acculturation to the communist regime.

At the same time, under communism, the role of tradition and of pre-existent, pre-communist discourses about Romanian identity and about the role of history writing in the process of modernization should be also understood from the point of view of the self-perception of the regime. As already mentioned, the RWP/RCP was engaged in building a new society and a new state. But, beginning with the second half of the fifties, the party began to perceive its activity more within a domestic framework rather than as part of world socialist revolution. Moreover, toward the end of the decade, the RWP/RCP also started to define its mission in counter distinction from the Soviet hegemon, as an act of self-determination. In building the case for the legitimacy of this endeavor, the party demarcated socialist construction as a national historical necessity caused by unfinished development and by persistent backwardness. It is not surprising that one of Lenin's quotes most invoked by Romanian leaders was that "in Eastern Europe... 'the Motherland' has yet to fully live its life from a historical point of view. Here the 'the defense of the Motherland' can still be the defense of democracy, of maternal language, of political freedom against oppressing nations [...] for Romanians...state-building in the national

³⁵ Bogdan Popa, "Primii ani ai Institutului pentru Studiul Istoriei Universale (1937-1940)" in *Institutul de istorie "Nicolae Iorga" 1937-1948* (Bucuresti: Oscar Print, 2009), p. 33.

bourgeois direction has not finished”³⁶ The Romanian communist polity gradually took on the mantle of a “nationalizing nation-state”, which according to Rogers Brubaker, is

the tendency to see the state as an “unrealized” nation-state, as a state destined to be a nation-state, the state of and for a particular nation, but not yet in fact a nation-state (at least not to a sufficient degree); and the concomitant disposition to remedy this perceived defect, to make the state what it is properly and legitimately destined to be, by promoting the language, culture, demographic position, economic flourishing, or political hegemony of the nominally state-bearing nation.³⁷

A direct consequence of the party’s own understanding of socialist construction as a program of building and consolidating the socialist nation was the fact that tradition began to offer important lessons, examples, and validation in problematizing Romanian identity. In late fifties, mid 19th century revolutionaries or reforms seemed to provide most wisdom for the agents of socialist transformation. By early and mid sixties, once the RWP/RCP officially declared itself at the center of a nation-state, the stock of tradition fell more and more heavily on the last decades of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th, when the Romanian modern state was built. Under the circumstances, scholarship on Romanian intellectual history and politics of national culture was vital in understanding what kind of traditions were recuperated and which was their role in the process of system self-definition and symbolic crystallization under communism.

One of the essential sources of continuity under communism was the sameness of mission that appeared by 1965 between the communist state and its prior incarnations: they all were nationalizing nation-states. Of course, another role of the literature I used for my second trajectory of research was that of mapping out the *direct* continuities on the historical front – who were the individuals who survived or remained in place after the rupture of 1945-1948, what was their position and function within the new system of planned science, how did they interact with

³⁶ „Marx, Engels, Lenin. Unele aprecieri ale clasicilor marxismului despre istoria țărilor românești: Valahia, Moldova, Transilvania”, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.34/1960, ff. 16-17.

³⁷ Rogers Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 63.

the party structures, and what was their level of insertion in the resulting production of knowledge.

The third trajectory of my research drew upon the political history of Romanian communism and the latter's ideological trappings. The Romanian case benefits from a plethora of excellent monographs on this section of its history, from the earlier authors such as Ghita Ionescu, Henry L. Roberts, Kenneth Jowitt, or Stephen Fischer-Galați, to books published in mid to late eighties such as those of Robert King, Michael Shafir, Daniel Nelson, Mary Ellen Fischer, or Trond Gilberg, or more recent studies, such as those of Dennis Deletant, Robert Levy, as well as Vladimir Tismaneanu's seminal volume *Stalinism for All Season*. At the same time, Romanian post-1989 historiography produced an impressive amount of books, articles, or collections of documents on the history of the Romanian communist party that were essential in the process of obtaining a better picture of the internal dynamics of the communist regime.³⁸ One problem, however, with the study of the Romanian case was the scarcity of methodological adaptation to the evolution of international debates on the nature and ways of understating of communist regimes, particularly the explosion of innovative research on the case of the Soviet Union and especially on Stalinism. More often than not, the ideological content of the communist experience in Romania is taken for granted or it is perceived as simply a form of Sovietism (which many times is not even defined). There are very few exceptions of research of specific policies of the regime on the basis of its core doctrine. Leaving aside earlier contributions (Ionescu, Jowitt, or Shafir), only Tismaneanu (by way of grand theory), Verdery (by way of

³⁸ The work of historians or political scientists such as Pavel Campeanu, Stelian Tanase, Andrian Cioroianu, Cristian Vasile, Dragoș and Cristina Petrescu, Virgil Țârău, Dorin Dobrințu, Dan Catănuș, Nicoleta Ionescu-Gură, Mihai Croitor, Ruxandra Cesereanu, Alina Pavelescu was particularly useful in my attempt to correlate the party's internal dynamics of power, its ideological evolution, and its policies of socialist transformation. Of course many other studies played a role in my research, I am only pointing to the ones with most relevance to my approach.

politics of culture) and Gail Kligman (through the analysis of gender relations and policies of reproduction) tackled with the task of deciphering the rationality of the communist experience in Romania.³⁹

An additional problem with the historiography on the Romanian case is the indefiniteness of the Nation and the non-historicization of nationalism under communism. In other words, very few authors ask the questions “What kind of Nation was the party expounding?” and “What was the nature of the nationalism that came to define the polity?” Moreover, “Was it one nationalism or there were multiple, layered ones according to the publics employing them?” Or, “Was the Nation under communism the result of overlapping Utopias brought forth by the agents of its proliferation?” In tackling with these queries, I found useful the simultaneous usage of theories of nationalism, of studies about national narratives and policies of nationalizing the nation-state in Romania and Eastern Europe during the 19th and the 20th century, and, last but not least, the role of nationalism in the evolution of totalitarian movements (i.e., fascism and Stalinism). Romanian communism considered the Nation as a paradigmatically modern phenomenon. But the narratives of identity that gradually developed since the second half of the fifties re-ignited the pre-1945 traditions of ethno-cultural ancientness and continuity, which by 1965 evolved into a claim to ethno-political unity across history. Therefore, nationalism under communism had a fundamental tension at the core of its textualizations: it was a product of political modernity, but it also was founded on trans-historical markers of identity. Under the circumstances, my analysis of nationalism in communist Romania relies heavily on the literature of the school of ethno-symbolism (particularly, Anthony D. Smith and John Armstrong).

³⁹ More recently there has been a flurry of studies on collectivization, of which most representative is Dorin Dobrinu and Contantin Iordachi (eds.), *Transforming Peasants, Property and Power: The Collectivization of Agriculture in Romania, 1949-1962* (New York/Budapest: CEU Press, 2009)

As mentioned earlier, the full picture of nationalism under communism in Romania cannot be understood without taking into account the identity politics and their subsequent narratives that developed in the past two centuries in this country. On the one hand, nationalism was obviously not an invention of the Romanian communist party or of local intelligentsia (historians included) from 1955 until 1989. On the other hand, this nationalism was not simply the revitalization of past nationalisms. I contend that, under communism, the Nation was the nexus of a multiplicity of discourses and politics of identity that were essentially the result of a synthesis of historical continuities and discontinuities. In 2010, Victor Neumann and Amir Heinen published a collective volume in which they advocate the study of the history of Romania by means of analysis of the evolution of key concepts in the country's modern social and political languages. I believe that this can also be a solution for understanding how the communist regime developed discourses and practices that allowed it to gradually reinvent itself into a national totalitarian movement.⁴⁰

I believe that an issue that still awaits more consistent analysis is problem of the Romanian communist regime's developmental legitimacy. That is, the latter's self-nationalizing project of modernity built enough structures of identification and belonging within society that allowed the party unchallenged rule for most of its stay in power. At the same time, the space for

⁴⁰ Gentile and Mallet defined this concept as “an *experiment in political domination* undertaken by a *revolutionary movement*, with an *integralist conception* of politics, that aspires toward a *monopoly of power* and that, after having secured power, whether by legal or illegal means, destroys or transforms the previous regime and constructs a new state based on a *single-party regime*, with the chief objective of *conquering society*. That is, it seeks the subordination, integration and homogenisation of the governed on the basis of the *integral politicisation of existence*, whether collective or individual, interpreted according to the categories, the myths and the values of a *palingenetic ideology*, institutionalised in the form of a *political religion*, that aims to shape the individual and the masses through an *anthropological revolution* in order to regenerate the human being and create the *new man*, who is dedicated in body and soul to the realisation of the revolutionary and imperialistic policies of the totalitarian party. The ultimate goal is to create a *new civilization*...” See Emilio Gentile and Robert Mallett “The Sacralisation of Politics: Definitions, Interpretations and Reflections on the Question of Secular Religion and Totalitarianism”, *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions*, vol. 1, no. 1, (2000), pp.19.

alternatives was limited to a minimum. Or, even alternatives were socialized in the regime politics of identity, the classic example being the *Cenacul Flacăra*. The latter movement and cultural phenomenon successfully channeled the youth's tendencies toward counter-culture into a mobilizational mythology of "the 'pure', 'free', 'authentic', 'truth-loving', 'culture thirsty', 'non-dogmatic' communist youth as opposed to 'dogmatic rigidity', 'antiquated ossification', or 'birocratization'."⁴¹ The persistence, in post-1989 Romania, for more than two decades of what Vladimir Tismaneanu called "fantasies of salvation"⁴² could be considered a further indication of the pervasiveness of the translation of real socialism into "communism as a lived system".⁴³

The present study starts from the premise that there was a Soviet blueprint system of planned science which can be tested for the Romanian case. On the basis of this test it is hoped that one can understand, on the one hand, the level of transfer from the Moscow center to the Bucharest periphery within the socialist camp; and, on the other hand, any resulting differences or variations will be treated as specificities of the local context and they will be further analyzed for the purpose of the identification of their origin. These particularities too are contrasted to developments in other Eastern European countries with similar historical trajectories as Romania. Or, they are counterpoised with the traditions and characteristics of the local past, which allows me to identify continuities and discontinuities under communism. At the same time, a deeper premise is that the model of politics of knowledge reflects a specific ideological alignment –

⁴¹ Paul Cernat, "Îmblânzitorul României Socialiste" in Paul Cernat, Ion Manolescu, Angelo Mitchivici, Ioan Stanomir *Explorări în comunismul românesc* (București: Polirom, 2004), p. 351.

⁴² Vladimir Tismaneanu, *Fantasies of Salvation: Democracy, Nationalism and Myth in Post-Communist Europe* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1998).

⁴³ Karen Dawisha, "Communism as a Lived System of Ideas in Contemporary Russia," *East European Politics and Societies*, 2005, Vol. 19, No. 3, pp. 463–493. Directly related to Dawisha's insight is the problem of nostalgia for the communist past. For example, Alexei Yurchak details the mechanisms of socialization in the late years of the Soviet Union, emphasizing the depth of integration in the socialist milieu despite the latter's outer seemingly incremental nature. See Alexei Yurchak, *Everything was Forever, Until It was No More: The Last Soviet Generation* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006).

Stalinism, which by way of Sovietization and the Romanian communist party was institutionalized in Romania. In other words, the study of the system of history-production is placed fundamentally on a relational basis that relies on a group of entanglements, which determine the evolution of both the subject of the research and the capacity of fully understanding the set of historical phenomena embedded in my case study.⁴⁴ Moreover, these multiple entanglements - center-periphery, local-regional, present-past - allow the researcher to avoid the trap of exceptionalism presupposed by research within a national framework.

The dissertation is structured in three parts. In the first one, I characterize the profile of the system of planned science connecting it to the transformation of the historical front. This section covers the first time period upon which my research is focused: from 1955 to 1963. In three successive chapters I describe the party and state institutions involved in science and history-production; the personnel dynamics within the epistemic communities, within the state structures of knowledge production, and within the party agencies controlling the system of planned science; and, I also present the overall policies regarding research and higher-education. The main purpose of this first part is to introduce the reader to the main actors involved in the Romanian communist regime's politics of knowledge, and more specifically of history. I am also preparing the ground for understanding the connections that I am establishing, in the following parts of my dissertation, between political discourse, party individuality, and historical encoding of the Nation.

Part two of this work overlaps chronologically to a large extent with part one, but it emphasizes the grand narratives of identity that are developing in the second half of the fifties

⁴⁴ Philipp Ther, "Beyond the Nation: The Relational Basis of a Comparative History of Germany and Europe," Conference Group for Central European History of the American Historical Association *Central European History*, Vol. 36, No. 1 (2003), pp. 68.

and early sixties *as a result* of the complex interaction between institutions, personnel, and policies that I detailed in part one. Keeping with the general tendency of those years in the field – the separation between party and national history – I developed two chapters. One looks into the way the RWP’s political discourse gradually shifts toward concepts such as national sovereignty, autochthonous-ness, *raison d’état*, creative Marxism-Leninism, etc. It also stresses how the employment of such discursive elements signal and accelerate a Romanization of party’s self-definition both in contemporary Romania and of its past “struggles”. The second chapter in part two analyzes the drafting and the contents of the national history treatise *Istoria României*, a grand project creating a master narrative of national history within the framework of historical materialism. This section presents the increasing hybridization between historiographical traditions and ideological adjustments of the discipline. The resulting treatise, with its dominant motifs and themes, is also taken to reflect the personnel, institutional, and policy dynamics of the historical front. Part two of the dissertation presents the manner in which the Nation is gradually written back into both historiography and political discourse.

Part three deals with the second period of my research – 1964-1966 - following three fundamental problems reflecting prior developments: the party’s and the scientific front’s politics of sovereignty within the Soviet bloc; the insertion of the Nation as a master symbol in the ideological construct of Romanian communism; and, the deepening, multiple formulations by means of history-production of the Nation with tradition figuring prominently in the legitimation of the new historiographical discourse. At the same time, part three maintains the model of institutions-personnel-policies in the description and analysis of the functions and dynamics of the system of planned science, particularly the historical front, under circumstances of the evolving environment of Romanian communism.

This three-tier structure of the dissertation is motivated by my multiple-angled approach to the profile and development of history-production in Romania. I first map the field in order to see the relevant actors (in terms of people, institutions, and policies). I am then moving toward the formulations of identity that appear from the interaction of these factors. This method allows me to better understand and frame the developments of the mid-sixties in terms of both novelty and continuity with the previous time slot. I believe that, by ordering my research in such manner, I can better explain the normativization of the socialist nation, in history and in ideology, as a cumulative phenomenon. Moreover, I claim that the latter was founded upon a process of structural development of planned science, and of history-production, *within* an increasingly self-centered communist regime. Last but not least, the resulting master narrative appears rooted in selected traditions circumscribing national identity generated by a systemic search for usable pasts. It is the opinion for this author that such complex interweaving of factors, discourses, time-frames, and reference points can permit the avoidance of instrumentalist, non-contextual, path-dependent interpretations of the hybridization between nationalism and Stalinism in Romania.

Under circumstances, it is inevitable that comparisons are asymmetrical. My effort for the Romanian context is monographic, but when I employ the comparative method I do it on specific issues or topics (e.g., the comparison between the main Romanian historical studies journal and *Voprosy Istorii* in the second half of the fifties, the comparison with the Bulgarian case on the matter of the project of Southeastern European studies, or the parallel analysis of Soviet and Romanian changes in the system of planned science in the early/mid-sixties). This practice does have the disadvantage of de-contextualizing specific developments from other countries by placing them in an analytical face-off with a case which has all its intricacies and genealogy

taken into account.⁴⁵ However, these asymmetrical comparisons are essential in order to be able to locate Romanian developments into a larger geographical and historical framework. They can be useful if one starts from the premise that domestic specificities have not appeared in a vacuum of influences, transfers, and contexts.

I also extensively rely on diachronic comparison on two main directions: first, in order to understand the relationship of the system of planned science and history-production with the ideology of the communist party, I rely upon extensive references to Stalin's Soviet Union. One of the main claims of my dissertation is that Romanian communism was a local variety of Stalinism and that my cross sectional research of the politics of expert knowledge can shed light on the domestic regime's ideological trappings. The second direction of diachronic comparison is between my subject's situation under communism and its particularities before 1945. I pursue this path in order to clarify the legacies, profile, and traditions of the organization and themes of history-writing during the second half of 19th and in the first half of the 20th century. The importance of this track is that it reveals some of the genealogies of the topics and subjects that dominated post-1955 historiography, its resulting national narratives, and ultimately the political discourse of the party. The diachronic method of comparison I adopted relies on what Robert C Tucker once called the "cultural-and-historical approach". The latter presupposed that, instead of direct comparison of communisms (i.e., Romanian versus Soviet), one should delve into "the developmental history of Communism, starting with Russian Communism" in order to understand "the underlying sources and dynamics of differentiation and non-differentiation

⁴⁵ Jurgen Kocka, "Asymmetrical Historical Comparison: The Case of the German *Sonderweg*," *History and Theory*, Vol. 38, No. 1 (Feb., 1999), pp. 48-49.

within the Communist sociocultural universe.”⁴⁶ Last but not least, diachronic comparisons can also safeguard the researcher from arguing that the communist period was a parenthesis in Romania’s history, a total break from the past - an estrangement from a presupposed ‘right’ historical path that the country would have been on if it wasn’t for the Cold War.

Throughout the present research I consistently tried, by means of comparative method, to keep a balance between the similarities and differences incurred by the subject of my study. I attempted to stay away from both structuralist analogy that ignores specificity and the emphasis on difference which may minimize “the thick fabric of inter-weavings”⁴⁷ intrinsic to the study of politics of knowledge under communism (center-periphery, local-regional, past-present, multiplicity of ideological conditionings).⁴⁸ I believe that, generally speaking, my comparisons can be branded as “middle range” for I pay attention to “to the intricate relationships between the elements compared and the particular societies in which they are located.”⁴⁹ The analysis of the historical front by way of the system of planned science in Romania is founded on idea that my units of research can reveal the extent to which, during the transfer and domesticization of the Soviet model, one can find constants and variations in the elements of the blueprint itself and in its overarching ideology.

Starting with November 2006, as a consequence of the activity of the Presidential Commission for the Analysis of the Communist Dictatorship in Romania (PCACDR), the access to the archives of the regime has significantly improved. One can even talk about an “archival

⁴⁶ Robert C. Tucker, “Stalinism and Comparative Communism”, in Robert C. Tucker (ed.) *Stalinism: Essays in Historical Interpretation* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1977), p. xix.

⁴⁷ Michael Werner and Bénédicte Zimmermann, “Beyond Comparison: Histoire Croisée and The Challenge of Reflexivity” in *History and Theory* 45 (February 2006), pp. 49.

⁴⁸ Nancy L. Green, “Forms of Comparison”, pp. 41-53 in Deborah Cohen and Maura O'Connor (eds.), *Comparison and History: Europe in Cross-National Perspective* (New York/London: Routledge, 2004).

⁴⁹ Raymond Grew quoted in Deborah Cohen, “Comparative History: Buyer Beware”, Cohen and O’Conner, *Comparison...*, p. 65.

revolution.”⁵⁰ The huge amounts of documents that are available now, especially the archives of the various sections and departments Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party (which have been particularly important for my research), reveal both the extensive degree of control and negotiation in the regime’s politics of science and of history in particular. They also show the numerous levers of coordination and decision-making in this field along with the permanent flux of communication between the party and the epistemic communities. The study of the archives should revolutionize many of the methodologies and approaches to Romanian communism. After 2006, one cannot simply deal with discursive settings without taking into account the institutional and decisional contexts within which these textualizations were produced. As I will show many times throughout this dissertation, the study of internal documents of the Central Committee or of the Academy, demonstrate the difficulty of assigned authorship or agency to various outcomes and outputs on the historical front or in the system of planned science. Moreover, the archives also demonstrate in my opinion the high level of continuity and “cumulativeness” in the policies of the communist regime. This is also one of the reasons why I am emphasizing gradualism for the period I deal with in the present study.

A cautionary note on the archival revolution: the flood of information makes difficult for the researcher to administer it properly and it can also generate “over-expectation”. One distinctive characteristic of the archives I worked with is that they are incomplete and that the information available must be confronted with other types of sources, either primary or secondary. Moreover, Oleg Klevniuk rightly remarked that, under circumstances of archival revolution, “historians disposing of crucial new material have set aside the question “What was

⁵⁰ For a brief overview see Andreas Langenohl’s review article “History between Politics and Public: Historiography, Collective Memory, and the “Archival Revolution” in Russia”, *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History*, Volume 1, Number 3, Summer 2000 (New Series), pp. 559-569.

it?” along with their search for overly general definitions, and have instead concentrated on the question “How did it happen?” – that is, on the development of functional theoretical insights that can mesh with concrete historical research.”⁵¹

Another tale that archives tell, at least for the time-frame of my research, is that of the state-capacity for mobilization, control, and organization under circumstances of ideological commitment to a totalizing project of socialist construction.⁵² In this context, I believe that, and I tried to apply this for my research, the archival revolution can shed more light on and help us better understand the functioning of party-state institutions and their impact upon distinct communities and milieus. And, of course, it can reinforce and refute a number of assumptions and hypothesis about the communist experience in Romania. I think that a significant new standpoint that develops after looking into the archives is the depth of the individuals’ integration within the party-state system and, implicitly, their contribution to its reproduction. This also raises the problem of personal commitment and systemic legitimacy that can be fully dealt with only after extensive research on multiple levels and structures of the regime.

This dissertation is based on a thorough and comprehensive study of the archive of the Central Committee’s Department of Agitation and Propaganda (see chapter two for this institution’s many incarnations) from 1945 until 1966 (though in the text my references start with 1954). The reason for focusing on this fund was that the AgitProp was the central party agency

⁵¹ Oleg Khlevniuk, “Stalinism and the Stalin Period after the ‘Archival Revolution’,” *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History*, Volume 2, Number 2, Spring 2001 (New Series), pp. 321.

⁵² Stephen Kotkin made the same observation about the information provided by the archival revolution on the inter-war Soviet state. He stated that “Some specialists in Soviet history, pointing to declassified archival materials, continue to emphasize the limits to the state’s powers. All states are limited. The limitations of the interwar Soviet state appear extraordinary mostly in light of its impossibly ambitious, unrealizable aims (which themselves added in a complicated way to the state’s increased capacity). But the “collectivization” of agriculture, the deportations, the forced industrialization, the spread of mass propaganda to remote corners of the realm in an array of languages, the mapping and surveying of the Soviet space and peoples, are all striking from a mobilization, state-capacity point of view”. See Stephen Kotkin, “Modern Times: The Soviet Union and the Interwar Conjuncture,” *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History*, Volume 2, Number 1, Winter 2001 (New Series), pp. 131.

that supervised the system of planned science in Romania and implicitly the historical front as well. It was the organ that ensured the implementation of the party line in the state structures of science. From this point view, my dissertation is the first study that used this archive for the entire period 1955 to 1966. The majority of the documents I cite in my research have never been published or referenced in previous research. An obvious complaint one can make against my approach is that the documents I used represent *the party's point of view* or the epistemic communities “speaking Bolshevik” (Kotkin) – the non-party agents attempting to translate their actions in the value system of the party in order to establish common grounds for communication or to achieve access to resources (material or symbolic). My initial intention was to counter the weight of information from the Agitprop with data from the archives of the Romanian Academy. However, despite several attempts, in 2008 and 2009, I did not succeed in gaining access to this source of information.

I tried to reach a balance of points of view on the various topics and events tackled in my text by analyzing the Agitprop data in parallel with an extensive survey of scholarly literature published between 1955 and 1966 in the various reviews of the historical front. I analyzed the four most important historical journals in Romania for the timeframe in question: *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, *Lupta de clasă*, *Analele Institutului de istorie a partidului*, and *Revue des Études Sud-Est Européennes*. Because of space limitations, I constructed my argumentation predominantly on the basis of the debates from *Studii*, which was the central organ of Romanian historiography between 1955 and 1965, referring to the others mainly by means of cross-referencing. For the most important years of my research I also consulted *Scînteia*, the main party newspaper. At the same time, I used extensively the speeches of the two general secretaries of the communist party, Gheorghe Gheorghiu Dej and Nicolae Ceaușescu. Moreover, I also looked into the monographs,

synthetic studies, and collective volumes that appeared on various topics of interest in the considered timeframe. The most important of them all was the four-volume treatise *Istoria Romîniei*.

Furthermore, considering that I did not have the time for an equally thorough research in the archival fund “Cancelarie” of the Central Committee, I also relied on the collection of documents published up to now in Romania, such as the first volume of the documents used by the PCADCR, the collections of Dan Catanus, Alina Pavelescu, or Mioara Anton. I did not do research in the Securitate (secret police) archives, but I used several volumes that were based on extensive forays into the Securitate files of various historians (e.g., contributions by Ioan Opris or Șerban Tanașoca). As already mentioned, I also tried to cover most of the memoirs published by various historians, cultural personalities, or party officials. The biographical references in this research are based on the *Enciclopedia istoriografiei românești*, *Dicționarul membrilor CC al PCR 1945-1989*, *Dicționarul membrilor Academiei Române*, and the biographical sections of the first volume of the PCADCR’s documents.

D. What is National Stalinism?

The concept “national Stalinism” is a fundamental element in understanding the transformations of the identitarian narratives within the Romanian communist regime. It has the potential for simultaneously explaining the nature of the transformative policies pursued by the party, this entity’s own organizational ethos, and the gradual hybridization of the social body’s conceptualization. At the basis of national Stalinism was a process of transition from historically defining society in accordance to class distinctions to a synthesis of criteria (social, historical, cultural, biological, etc.) which led to the construction of a historiographical narrative of the

“socialist nation” defined by primordialism, ethnocentrism, transformism, protochronism, insulation, and homogenization.⁵³

National Stalinism was a complex of policies, ideological tenets, and social contexts reflecting the party’s commitment to building socialism in a country defined as a nation-state. It appeared as one party attempted to construct a national civilization in the aftermath of Sovietization. The present dissertation is a case study of how national Stalinism came into being at a discursive level with the help of writing history. I analyze the evolution of the historical front in relation with the party line in order to see how the Nation, as a master symbol, was written back into Romanian history-production and how the resulting master-narrative wormed its way into or overlapped with the communist party’s political discourse. My research can be read as an attempt to substantiate the conceptualization of national Stalinism by means of investigation of politics of knowledge, of history in particular, in communist Romania.

There are two essential premises for the formulation of national-Stalinism: the unreformed nature of the communist dictatorship in Romania (i.e., the rejection of de-Stalinization) and the principle of self-determination as means to strengthen regime individuality. In other words, national Stalinism was a symptom of Khrushchevism; it was both a reaction against and an adaptation to it. According to political scientist, Vladimir Tismaneanu, as a political variety within Leninism,

national Stalinism systematically opposed any form of liberalization, let alone democratization. Reactionary and self-centered, it valued autarky and exclusiveness. It adhered to a militaristic vision both domestically and internationally. National Stalinism clung to a number of presumably universal laws of socialist revolution and treated any “deviation” from these as a betrayal of class principles. It voiced political anguish and played

⁵³ The earliest contributions along these interpretative lines have been provided by Vladimir Tismaneanu: „The Ambiguity of Romanian Communism”, *Telos*, no. 60 (Summer 1984), pp. 65-79 and “Ceașescu’s Socialism”, *Problems of Communism*, January-February, 1985: 50-66. Also see Vladimir Tismaneanu, *Fantoma lui Gheorghiu-Dej*, ediția a-II-a, revăzută și adăugită (București: Humanitas, 2008). The volume contains several studies on the relationship between communism and nationalism published by Vladimir Tismăneanu at the end of the 1980s.

on sentiments of national isolation, humiliation, and panic. It frequently tempted Leninist elites in countries where the pre-Stalinist radical left had been weak or virtually nonexistent, or where the regime's legitimacy derived from external sources: Romania, Albania, North Korea, Czechoslovakia after 1968, and the GDR. National Stalinism was a symptom of degeneration. It was narcissistic and anachronistic; it valued uniformity and exploited tribalist resentment and allegiances.⁵⁴

Tismaneanu contrasted national Stalinism with national communism, which he perceived as a

critical reaction to Soviet imperialism, hegemonic designs, and rigid ideological orthodoxy. It was relatively innovative, flexible, and tolerant to political relaxation. National communism encouraged intellectual creativity and theoretical heresies. Rejecting Soviet tutelage, national communism generally favored revisionist (both moderate and radical) alternatives to the enshrined Soviet model. The most important exponents of national communism were Josip Broz Tito and his close associate Edvard Kardelj, the Hungarian communist reformer Imre Nagy, Czechoslovakia's Alexander Dubcek, the Italian communist leaders Palmiro Togliatti and Enrico Berlinguer, and the Spanish Communist Party's general secretary and main theorist of Eurocommunism, Santiago Carillo.⁵⁵

The above described dyad is an ideal-type construction and its usefulness consists rather in understanding the imperfect cases situated at different points on the conceptual axis. Its essential merit, however, consists in the fact that it pointed to fundamental differences in the ideological self-definition and re-invention of communist regimes in Europe (with the Italian and Spanish cases as non-state variants). Moreover, for the Romanian case, it indicated that a new form of aligning ideology, the national community, and the program of latter's modernization

⁵⁴ Vladimir Tismaneanu, *Stalinism for all Seasons: A Political History of Romanian Communism* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 2003), p. 33. In a later contribution, Tismaneanu added the case of Poland at the end of the sixties and early seventies during the struggle for power between Wladyslaw Gomulka, the head of the Polish United Workers' Party, and General Mieczyslaw Moczar, minister of internal affairs by 1964, and chairman of the Union of Fighters for Freedom and Democracy (ZBoWiD). In this re-assessment of the point made in his monograph, Tismaneanu indicated Romania and Albania as the paradigmatic cases of national Stalinism, while Poland, the GDR, or even Bulgaria are seen as having experienced the temptation of national Stalinism, without the latter becoming the core of the political regime. See Vladimir Tismaneanu, "What Was National Stalinism?" in *The Oxford Handbook of Postwar European History* (forthcoming, 2011). Tony Judt used a similar typology in his *Postwar*. He identified national Stalinism as a route to regime stability, applying it to Albania and Romania. See Tony Judt, *Postwar: A History of Europe since 1945* (New York: Penguin Press, 2005), pp. 430-431.

⁵⁵ Tismaneanu, *ibidem*, p. 32. Another distinction that is useful in order to better understand the nature of national Stalinism is that between the latter and "welfare dictatorship" (*Fürsorgediktatur*). It could be argued that, at varying degrees in various cases, Leninism's 'domesticization', in the "Aquinian phase of the Soviet bloc" (Jowitt), brought about a subversion of party arbitrariness and domination by means of the establishment of a "social(ist) contract" characterized by: co-option, promotion, limited accountability, segmentary reform, and the limitation of extra-legality. The identitarian discourse underlying this wave of streamlining (adjusted) communism was formulated in minimal terms, a form of 'socialist patriotism' defined as *coexistence* and *acquiescence*. Therefore, one could say that the process of de-radicalization put forth pretensions of 'socialist civism' aiming at maintaining social peace and stability. See Konrad Jarausch, "Care and Coercion: The GDR as Welfare Dictatorship", in Jarausch ed., *Dictatorship as Experience...*, pp. 47-73.

had been reached, crucially distinguishing it from other cases in the Soviet bloc. This process can also help explain the regime's further development and ultimate violent demise. Similarly to Tismaneanu's assertion, sociologist Katherine Verdery remarked that "there appears to be a loose but not perfect association between more or less officially promoted national ideology and the persistence of a centralized command form of socialism beyond the initial phase of Stalinist consolidation."⁵⁶ The central problem then is to see how Stalinism accepts hybridization by way of the Nation. To put it differently, what did allow within the nature of Stalinism the integration of a master-narrative about the national community?

I believe that at the root of any explanation lies Stephen Kotkin's essential observation that within the Soviet phenomenon "everything was invested in identity."⁵⁷ But first things first: by Stalinism I understand a complex of ideological traits and state practices implemented during Stalin's reign; I also consider that they represent a blueprint upon which further interpretative creativity was possible; in the Romanian case, the latter permitted a (nation-class) hybridized state paradigm of identity. Therefore, in the remaining pages, my aim will be to point out the trajectories upon which identity discourses were built in the Soviet Union under Stalin, and their potential reflection for the case of Romania, starting with the second half of the 1950s. I am discussing the potential for ethnocentric collective identity in a system in full gear for social engineering that claimed to be socialist in content and only national in form. My basic presupposition is that just like in case of the USSR, when the Soviet state and the Russian core became under Stalin the foremost agents of socio-economic progress in the world, in Romania, the communist party triggered a dizzying upward spiral of political, economic, and cultural struggle for the Romanians' preeminence within the country and on the world stage. The

⁵⁶ Verdery, *National Ideology*..., pp. 306-307.

⁵⁷ Stephen Kotkin, "The State – Is it us?", p. 50.

declared achievement of the latter was taken as proof for the successful modernity project of Romanian communism. Ultimately, “the expressive appreciation of the nation” (Jowitt)⁵⁸ in the country was a mechanisms of revitalizing, of reviving the party’s heroic mission.

One additional methodological note: below I will approach the communist regime as the historical phenomenon from early sixties up to 1989. I am going beyond the timeframe of the dissertation because I am attempting to provide a general characterization of the party-state in Romania. The rest of my dissertation was constructed in order to show the process, in one sector of the communist system, by which this ideological construct came about. The study of history-production can also function as an exemplification of national Stalinism. This reasoning is justified by the principle, formulated as early as 1955, by the president of the RPR Academy, Traian Săvulescu, according to which “the successes of science and culture will increase the patriotic feelings of the men of science and culture and will function as enduring pillars of the life of our independent and free state.”⁵⁹ This formula will be at the core of the politics of knowledge throughout the existence of the party-state, while also acting as a mechanism for the national Stalinist hybridization.

The possibility of national Stalinism appeared in the context of the post-1953 reappraisal of the civilization transfer presupposed by Romania’s Sovietization. After 1956, the RWP was forced to re-define its program of modernization experiencing along the way a re-assessment of its own identity within the domestic context. Using Khrushchivite lingo, Gheorghiu-Dej circumscribed the starting point of what will later become the physiognomy of the communist regime in Romania:

⁵⁸ Kenneth Jowitt, *Revolutionary Breakthroughs and National Development. The Case of Romania 1944-1965* (Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California, 1971), p. 273.

⁵⁹ Traian Săvulescu, “Știința în slujba poporului și a construirii socialismului”, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no. 70/1955, f. 35.

[We need]...a careful and close study, on the unshakable bases of Marxism-Leninism, of the concrete conditions in each country, a creative attitude in designing our political line. More than ever, dogmatism and shibboleths (*şablon*) ignoring national particularities and the tasks that they impose would now be harmful. The prerequisite for strengthening communist parties, the development of their connections with the masses, the unification of all the people's democratic forces around them is the combination of the general international goals and tasks of the working class with the defense of national interests of each people – the correct formulation of the people's interests on the basis of Marxism-Leninism.⁶⁰

The starting point of national Stalinism was therefore the *territorialization* of the social and political utopia incumbent in the program of building socialism in one country. To take my point further, this ideological construct was the result of the adaptation to a national context of the eschatological presupposition that was the nucleus of Stalinism. This process will be reflected in later definitions of the socialist nation. According to a programmatic volume published by the Institute for Party History in 1971, the latter was

The national community characterized by the social-political and moral-ideological cohesion of its members generated by the socialist economy, by a homogeneous social structure manifested in the alliance of all classes and social categories under the leadership of the working-class and of its party. It has a socialist culture and consciousness founded upon the dialectical materialist conception and on its own, sovereign state formation. [...] Each socialist nation has its own specificity (*specific propriu*) resulting from the special conditions of its historical development and of its building of socialism.⁶¹

In this normative context, national Stalinism was not only a matter of state sovereignty and ideological reformation. The socialist nation reflected a specific understanding of belonging and of citizenship. Two fundamental processes typical of Stalinism were at work within the phenomenon of hybridization. As Sheila Fitzpatrick underlined, ascribing class and nation took central stage in the making of society under Stalinism. The resulting classifications generated the social realities of Stalinism rather than simply reflecting them.⁶² Class and nation were resultants of the interaction between the vectors of revolutionary discourse and socio-economic

⁶⁰ „Articol scris de tov. Gheorghe Gherghiu-Dej ce rumează să fie publicat în ziarul Pravda”, 25 aprilie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.52/1956, ff. 10.

⁶¹ Ioan Ceterchi (coord.), *Națiunea și contemporaneitatea* (București: Editura Științifică, 1971), pp. 66-68.

⁶² Michael Geyer (with assistance from Sheila Fitzpatrick), “Introduction. After Totalitarianism – Stalinism and Nazism Compared”, in Michael Geyer and Sheila Fitzpatrick (eds.), *Beyond Totalitarianism. Stalinism and Nazism Compared* (Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 33.

transformism. Subsequently, socialization became political practice, that is, a means of bridging “what one does with what s/he thinks and says about what s/he does.” (Fitzpatrick) Political practice was the area where the citizen came to terms with the “deliberatively ideological” environment s/he lived in.⁶³ Historian Jochen Hellbeck pointed to

a strange concordance between the prescriptive and the experiential sphere”, when “turning from the official prescripts of public self-disclosure and self-integration into the revolutionary movement to their effects on the individuals’ sense of self and particularly their articulation of dissent [...] Soviet subjects owed their authority to speak out to their self-alignment with the revolutionary master-narrative. Just as the Revolution was a source of subjectivity and enormous power, a subjective stance against the Revolution threatened to engender the loss of self and total powerlessness.”⁶⁴

Stalinism was a project of transforming human nature, marked by keywords such as “remaking”, “re-forging”, or “remolding”, which indicator of authenticity was a system of socialist ethics and aesthetics founded upon a permanent accomplishment of one’s work in a society regulated by the state. It was concerned with “sculpting and ‘gardening’ (to use Zygmunt Bauman’s evocative term) a better, purer society while simultaneously molding society’s human material into a more emancipated, conscious, and superior individual – ‘the new man’.”⁶⁵ Subsequently, citizenship was dependent on one’s contribution to the building of socialism in one country.

⁶³ Sheila Fitzpatrick, “Politics as Practice. Thoughts on a New Soviet Political History” in *Kritika: Extrapolations in Russian and Eurasia History* 5, 1 (Winter 2004), pp. 27-54. Fitzpatrick was a the forefront of the literature arguing for social history “with the state left out”. This revisionist trend was ‘officialized’ by the series of articles published in the *Russian Review* between 1986-1987 [see *Russian Review*, vol. 46, No.4, (Oct 1987) and vol. 46, No.4, (Oct. 1987)]. However, S. Fitzpatrick, arguably the most influential scholar within this group, has gradually changed her views on the relationship between state and society in the Soviet Union under Stalin. See the difference between Fitzpatrick’s “New Perspectives on Stalinism”, vol. 45, No. 4 (Oct., 1986), pp. 357-373, her contributions in *Stalinism – New Directions* (London/New York: Routledge, 2000), and more recently Sheila Fitzpatrick, “Revisionism in Retrospect: A Personal View,” *Slavic Review*, Vol. 67, No. 3 (Fall, 2008), pp. 682-704.

⁶⁴ Jochen Hellbeck, “Speaking Out. Languages of Affirmation and Dissent”, pp. 129-136 in Michael David-Fox, Peter Holquist, and Marshall Poe *The Resistance Debate in Russian and Soviet History*, *Kritika Historical Studies* 1, (Bloomington: Slavica Publishers, 2003), pp. 103-138.

⁶⁵ Peter Holquist, “‘Information is the Alpha and Omega of Our work’: Bolshevik Surveillance in its Pan-European Context,” *The Journal of Modern History*, vol. 69, No. 3 (Sep., 1997), pp. 415-450.

Stalinism was based on Marxist eschatology, “a narrative that structured historical time as the odyssey of human consciousness.”⁶⁶ Therefore, the analysis of the application of identity, of the conceptual structure and evolution of it during Stalinism, becomes an inquiry in the process by which classes are defined, ascribed, and transformed across time, particularly the proletariat (the subject of History), in the process of emancipation (‘a secularized version of salvation’). The features of identity, at both macro and micro level (the polity vs. the individual) in Stalinism are apparent only if one signals out the transition from the proletariat to the people and from the people to the popular community under conditions of building socialism in one country. The *territorialization* of the eschatological progression generated a distinct re-imagination of the body politic under circumstances of utopia in action. In the words of Stalin, “If you search for everything in Marx, you’ll get off track....In the USSR you have a *laboratory*....and you think Marx should know more than you about socialism.”⁶⁷ For Stalin, Marxism was primarily an ideological space of *creativity*; orthodoxy was there to define the “developmental tasks”, but the actual practice inscribed the physiognomy⁶⁸ and regulated the metabolism of the body politic in the Soviet Union.

⁶⁶ “by *eschatology* I mean here a linear concept of time outlining a prescribed temporal motion of the proletariat from the ‘darkness’ of capitalism toward salvation in a classless society”, in Igal Halfin, *From Darkness to Light. Class, Consciousness, and Salvation in Revolutionary Russia* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2000), pp. 1-6.

⁶⁷ He made this statement in his exchanges with the authors of the project “Short Course on Political Economy”. See Ethan Pollock, “Stalin as the Coryphaeus of Science: Ideology and Knowledge in the Post-War Years”, pp. 283, in Sarah Davies and James Harris eds., *Stalin: A New History* (Cambridge, UK : Cambridge University Press, 2005), 271-188

⁶⁸ the term was used both in the Soviet Union under Stalin and in Romania under Ceaușescu to describe the socialist community. The term ‘metabolism’ is analyzed by Erik van Ree in his article “Stalin’s Organic Theory of the Party”, *Russian Review*, vol. 52, no. 1 (Jan., 1993), pp. 43-57. He quotes from Stalin’s speech at the Fifteenth Party Congress from 7th December, 1927: “our party is a living organism; as in every organism a metabolism takes place: old, obsolete stuff falls off; new growing things flourish and develop.” Considering that on the one hand, in the Soviet Union party purges many a times coincided with wholesale populational purges, and that, on the other, by the end of both Stalin’s and Ceaușescu’s reign the Party (or in organizations affiliated to it) was relying on mass membership, I believe that one can extrapolate the terminology for the entire society.

In Romania, by mid-1960s, the head of the Political Publishing House, Valter Roman, insisted that the practice of inserting footnotes in the editions of translations from Marx and Engels “where their statements did not correspond to the historical reality” be deepened so that to adapt to the specific national particularities the work of the founding fathers. At the same time, he also boasted that Romania, “after the USSR and GDR, is ranked first in the amount of the work of Marx and Engels translated.”⁶⁹ Along similar lines, but in much authoritative and sweeping manner, Nicolae Ceaușescu, then General Secretary of the Romanian Communist Party, in 1971, was arguing that

in all party work and in all fields of activity, at the core of educational work the decisions of the Party Congresses, of the Central Committee, the party and state documents must have a central role. They are the essence of what it means for Romania creative Marxism-Leninism, so they ought to become the basis of the whole education undergone in all fields of activity.”⁷⁰ [Furthermore] ... the general feature of the Party's activity was its devotion to the fundamental interests of the people, the creative application of the general principles of scientific socialism to the concrete conditions of our country, the rallying and successful organization of the working masses in building *the new social system in Romania*.⁷¹

In Romania, starting with the sixties, the Nation as, a master symbol, did not appear primarily as a result of the re-enchantment with past. It was essentially presupposed by the assertion of the sovereignty of the socialist nation-state. The utopia in action took a national mantle. The regression into tradition was either a useful side-show, a welcomed by-product, or a necessary corollary to the re-definition of the space for the Stalinist civilization, of the nature of the civilizational agent, and of the identity of the polity undergoing socialist transformation. The primary marker of identity was one's commitment to “the Romanian path to socialism,” though

⁶⁹ „Stenograma ședinței de analiză a activității Editurii Politice din 22 februarie 1965”, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.15/1965, f. 5.

⁷⁰ Nicolae Ceaușescu, *Propuneri de măsuri pentru îmbunătățirea activității politico-ideologice, de educare marxist-leninistă a membrilor de partid, a tuturor oamenilor muncii*, 6-9 iulie 1971, pp. 82-83 (București: Editura Politică, 1971).

⁷¹ Nicolae Ceaușescu, *The Romanian Communist Party Program of 1974* (București: Editura Minerva, 1975), pp. 61.

since the seventies belonging was increasingly conditioned by ethnicity. But national Stalinism first emphasized socialist consciousness and then the ability of the individual to apply it into a national context.

Exhaustive knowledge of man and society was the fuel of progress under Stalinism. As Jochen Hellbeck asserted: “an individual living under the Bolshevik system could not conceivably formulate a notion of himself independently of the program promulgated by the Bolshevik state. An individual and the political system in which he lived cannot be viewed as two separate entities.”⁷² One of the defining features of the research upon Stalinism is the difficulty to draw a clear cut line between society and state. Identity gained meaning only within the frameworks ascribed by the state, regardless if it’s about class, nation, religion or gender⁷³. The criterion of loyalty, integration and reward (or their opposites) was that of revolutionary purity, measured in accordance with the official interpretation and innovation upon Marxism-Leninism.

Under the circumstances, the individual experience under Stalinism was both mobilizational and pedagogical. All activities were to become a performing act (work) and a learning process (education). These criteria of human action were used together for purposes of

⁷² see Jochen Hellbeck, “Fashioning the Stalinist Soul: The Diary of Stepan Podlubnyi, 1931-1938,” *Janrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, no.2 (1997) and “Working, Struggling, Becoming: Stalin-Era Autobiographical Texts”, *Russian Review*, no. 60 (July 2001), pp. 340-359. Also see Jochen Hellbeck, *Revolution on My Mind: Writing a Diary under Stalin* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), and Igal Halfin, *Terror in My Soul: Communist Autobiographies on Trial* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003).

⁷³ We can take as example the Soviet Union and Romanian case of reproductive politics. Both under Stalin and Ceaușescu abortion was banned leading to multiple effects upon societal dynamics and implicitly upon gender categories and the role of the family. Gail Kligman described, for Romania, the nature of the “socialization of reproductive behavior: economic socialization by means of encouragement or inhibition, through social or fiscal measures regulating the couples reproduction; political socialization, through the responsabilization of the couples in relation to the whole social body; and, medical socialization, by stressing the pathogenic value of birth-control for both the individual and the specie.” The family lost its previous institutional integrity, becoming a social space of *policing* and the basic productive (with a view to both *work* and *education*) unit of the communist regime. See Gail Kligman, *Politica duplicității - Controlul reproducerii în România lui Ceaușescu*, traducere de Marilena Dumitrescu (București: Editura Humanitas, 2000), pp. 135-136.

accelerating a *reformed* homogenization of the national community. This transformation implied killing off the rudiments of the dying classes, meaning both their numbers (i.e., members) and their principles (i.e., mentality). In their turn, classes were to be based upon the existence of individuals across time in society: “the three indicators of class were generally considered to be current social position, former (prewar or pre-revolutionary) social position, and parents’ social status.”⁷⁴ Moreover, one’s class behavior was to be determined not only by social position (or the history of it), but also by his/her activity in accordance to ideological line of the communist polity. Many a times, within “purge poetics”, oppositionism, or what Stalin coined “opportunism”, could be traits of either impurity of belief among the eschatological chosen (‘proletariat’) or of hidden, past dereliction among the community of the fallen (‘petit-bourgeois habits’). Class as a category of identity was mainly defined in accordance to potential, actual or proven loyalty to the goals and practice of the socialist revolution. In 1960, Gheorghiu Dej talked about the “living ghosts (*strigoi*) of the past who, in tainting the very condition of being a man of culture and a citizen of our country, have tried to calumny and badmouth (*ponegrească*) our people and its creative work [...] These elements cynically declared that they were ashamed to be part of the Romanian people, calling it a people of hostlers.”⁷⁵ Subsequently, under Stalinism,

⁷⁴ Sheila Fitzpatrick, *Ascribing Class*, in *Stalinism...*, p. 28.

⁷⁵ „Cuvântare rostită la Conferința organizației regionale de partid Cluj” (13 martie 1960) in Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, *Articole și cuvântări. August 1959 – mai 1961* (București: Editura Politică, 1961), p. 82. The logic of subjective and objective “enemy of the people” served as basis for Stalin’s theory of a withering proletarian state going through a phase of maximum strengthening for reasons of intensification of class struggle upon the approach of communism and of capitalist encirclement. A similar awareness about the *alien* within the socialist man/woman, among them and from without filtered conceptions and loyalty and justified mobilization of state power in Romania: “we must not forget for a single moment that there still are various alien outlooks, mentalities of the old bourgeois-landlord society, that not all citizens have definitely broken off from mentalities and practices of the past and that unfortunately these still influence even young people. Besides, we should not forget that all kind of influence, alien to our revolutionary outlook on world and life are still coming from the outside.” In Nicolae Ceaușescu, *Report to the Central Committee on the Activity of the Romanian Communist Party between the Twelfth Congress and the Thirteenth Congress* (Bucharest: Agerpress, 1984), pp. 73.

social reproduction was insured by “an energization of the symbolic meaning of citizenship and individual participation in the state.”⁷⁶

This is, in my opinion, what Stephen Kotkin meant by the phrase “playing the identity game”⁷⁷: the rules of social identification enforced by the state could be appropriated and actively used by the individual with conditions of a permanent struggle to prove one’s productive and faithful belonging to the Marxist-Leninist enterprise (not an easy job considering the conditions of cyclical purgatory and cleansing practices). One’s identity in society was therefore qualified less by its occupational position/mode of production, but rather by one’s *status*, which is determined by the person’s perceived faith and proximity to a power structure. The area of autonomy one had in determining its identity within Stalinist society, if s/he escaped initial class profiling (and possible purge), consisted of what Mark Edele called the “internalization of Soviet discourse as a method of thinking.” The individual did have the choice of a “personal working through” (*prorabotka*) or of working on oneself (*rabota nad soboi*) in order to bypass the determinism of an ascribed class identity.⁷⁸ Edele went on to argue that by stressing “the distinction between the sphere of production and the sphere of distribution and consumption,”

⁷⁶ David L. Hoffmann and Annette F. Timm, “Utopia Biopolitics. Reproductive Policies, Gender Roles, and Sexuality in Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union,” in Geyer and Fitzpatrick, *Beyond Totalitarianism ...*, p. 122

⁷⁷ Stephen Kotkin, *Magnetic Mountain: Stalinism as a Civilization*, pp. 151–152, 223–225.

⁷⁸ For this argument I consider fundamental two articles: Sheila Fitzpatrick, *Ascribing Class*, in *Stalinism...*, pp. 20–47 and Jean-Paul Depretto, “Stratification without Class,” *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 8, 2 (Spring 2007), pp. 375–388. In her article, Fitzpatrick argues that “the ‘classes’ of the Stalinist society should have been defined, like *sosloviia*, in terms of their relationship to the state rather than, like Marxist classes, in terms of their relationship to each other. This gives us a new perspective on the much-remarked ‘primacy of the state’ in the Soviet state-and-society relationship.” At the same time, if one was to follow Ken Jowitt’s analysis of the nature of Leninist organizations, it can be stated that the intrinsic status-like features of the ‘party of the new type’ (which is the locus of decision-making and leadership, i.e. domination) became a model of societal hierarchies. Jowitt pinpoints three such features: “a marked tendency to distinguish between insiders and outsiders; an emphasis on the security and protection of belonging to a closed, well-bounded group; and, a placement of power in the hands of cadres whose central role is emphasized.” [in Kenneth Jowitt, *New World Disorder. The Leninist extinction* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1992)] In both cases, Romania and the Soviet Union, the preeminence of status over class in determining one’s position in the system was reinforced by the practice of the personality cult of the leader (Stalin or Ceaușescu).

which becomes useful in understanding the ‘everyday’, where “the society is strongly structured around differential access to goods, services, and information. This social stratification engendered practices designed to get scarce information and scarce goods, and to survive in the desert of commodities and information created by totalitarian social engineering.” His reinterpretation of the Harvard school (Inkeles, Bauer, Kluckhohn, Fainsod, Gerschenkron, etc.) leaves the door open for an analysis of identity in Stalinism as a result of both conflict and consensus across social groups and in relation to different institutions.⁷⁹

Under Stalinism the concept of class was characteristically fluid and porous in contact with status related aspects. It was so because of circumstances of radical transformism and political leveling that brought forth the additional categories of nationality and citizenship. The backwardness of the country and the acute mobility of the population in the Soviet Union did not only require the representation of individuals as class members, but also their identification within the community of peoples in the USSR.⁸⁰ The 1930-31 laws concerning citizenship proclaimed that “an individual was considered a citizen of the USSR by virtue of birth when at the time of birth both parents were citizens of the USSR or one of them was. The new formula removed parental discretion over a child’s citizenship.” By 1938, Stalin issued another law that “was especially illustrative for the ‘Stalinist concern for children’ [...] children over the age of 14 and Soviet women would now automatically take on the citizenship of the male head of

⁷⁹ Mark Edele, “Soviet Society, Social Structure, and Everyday Life. Major Frameworks Reconsidered”, *Kritika: Explorations in Russia and Eurasia History* 8, 2 (Spring 2007), pp. 349-73.

⁸⁰ The importance of going past class analysis when assessing the problem of identity under Stalinism (one may even say under really existing socialism) is best summarized by Golfo Alexopoulos statement: “In the Soviet Union there were citizens and there were citizens.” In one of the most interesting proposals of explanation for the dissolution of state socialism in Eastern Europe, Kenneth Jowitt stated that “the critical issue facing Leninist regimes was citizenship. The political individuation of an articulated potential citizenry treated contemptuously by an inclusive (not democratic), neotraditional (not modernized) Leninist polity was the cause of Leninist breakdown.” In Kenneth Jowitt, “Weber, Trotsky and Holmes on the Study of Leninist Regimes”, *Journal of International Affairs*, 2001, pp. 44.

household.”⁸¹ From this type of maximum ascription of citizenship by means of *jus sanguinis* to a primordial justification of belonging to the socialist body politic there is only a step. For example, in Romania, when the party leadership was faced with the problem of mass emigration to Hungary, Ceaușescu had the following to say:

the whole people and especially the youth must be fully aware of the fact that more than 2000 years our forerunners, the most enlightened men, the people itself - the real history maker - have waged hard battles and made many sacrifices, but have always borne in mind the past, the present as well as the future of the people, of our country, have done their utmost and even laid down their lives to secure a bright future for our nation (...) the broad masses never thought of deserting the land where they were born, where their ancestors lived and where our descendants should live forever.”⁸²

Earlier, in 1976, another party document argued that in matters of marriage with foreign nationals, even decision-making ought to be restricted in accordance to both the state’s and the relatives’ discretion:

It is precisely by acting in the spirit of humanness of revolutionary humanism that we are in duty bound to take into account the agreement of the family, of the relatives, who according to ancient customs of the Romanians have a word to say when the young ones get married. The parents have a right to call on the State authorities and the authorities have the duty to take into account their objections which are justified.”⁸³

Citizenship under Stalinism was also defined as labor in the service of the state: “labor determined one’s status in society, and the failure to work would result in criminal punishment.” Golfo Alexopoulos remarks that “what makes the Soviet case different is not the promise of social welfare. It is the assertion of material security as constituting *the* principal right or fundamental privilege of Soviet citizenship, as well as the disproportionate emphasis on

⁸¹ Golfo Alexopoulos, “Soviet Citizenship, More or Less. Rights, Emotions, and States of Civic Belonging”, *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 7, 3 (Summer 2006), pp. 505-508.

⁸² Nicolae Ceaușescu, *Raport asupra activității politice, ideologice, culturale și educaționale în direcția creării omului nou, constructor conștient și devotat al societății socialiste multilaterale dezvoltate și a comunismului în România*, 26 Octombrie 1989 (București: Editura Politică, 1989), pp. 16. Romania was a notorious for the difficulty and massive paperwork in cases of persons willing to renounce citizenship. At the same time, Romania was one of the countries that would seldomly exile dissenters/dissidents.

⁸³ Nicolae Ceaușescu, *Raport asupra activității politice, ideologice, culturale și educaționale în direcția creării omului nou, constructor conștient și devotat al societății socialiste multilaterale dezvoltate și a comunismului în România*, 2 iunie 1976, (București: Editura Politică, 1977), pp. 109-110.

emphasis on obligations over rights.”⁸⁴ In a similar vein, in Romania, membership in the socialist body politic was immutably defined by work:

The people has to consciously act for solving the problems that appear in the process of building the multilaterally developed society, it has to consciously forge its future (...) *All citizens must perform an useful work!*⁸⁵ [my italics] [Furthermore] ... “everyone should understand that it is his moral and patriotic duty to dedicate all his energies, capacity and power of work to the growth of socialist property - the main source of economic and social progress of the country, of the welfare and happiness of the whole nation. (...) Each citizen should be aware that his welfare and happiness are strictly dependent on the way in which he works for developing national economy, for increasing out whole people's wealth.”⁸⁶

One can argue, based on the above statements, that another element of determining one's identity under Stalinism was, besides “speaking Bolshevik”, “acting like the state”, or “taking onto its class”, the effort and enthusiasm in building socialism in one country. Citizenship then became both a weapon of integration and of repression.⁸⁷ It was the criteria upon which inclusion and exclusion were performed. Historians Arch Getty, Gabor Rittersporn and Viktor Zemskov noticed that the two years after the announced end of class struggle (1937-1938) witnessed 86% of all deaths sentences that were carried out for the entire 1929-1952 period.⁸⁸ Many authors argue (Peter Holquist, Amir Weiner, Igal Halfin, Lynn Viola, etc.) that integration within the state on the basis of civic belonging proved to be the source of a resurgence and intensification of ‘excisionary’ practices by the state. He who was labeled incorrigible became eligible to elimination or re-education. One of the means of controlling the population during Stalin's reign

⁸⁴ Golfo Alexopoulos, *Stalin's Outcasts: Aliens, Citizens, and the Soviet State, 1926-1936* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003), pp. 140-141.

⁸⁵ Nicolae Ceaușcu, *Propuneri de masuri...* 6-9 iulie 1971, pp. 36.

⁸⁶ *Idem*, pp. 67.

⁸⁷ See Alfred J. Rieber evaluation of the comments upon Alexopoulos's article: Alfred J. Rieber, “The Problem of Social Cohesion”, *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasia History* 7, 3 (Summer 2006), pp. 599-608. In the same issue, Timothy Snyder stresses what he calls the “elusive civic subject in Russian history”, phenomenon caused by the indeterminate criteria of citizenship both during the tsarist Empire and the Soviet Union. He argues that the amalgamation and interchangeability of class, occupation, family, nationality, gender, religion in the definition of the civic subject makes very difficult the description of social structures and of their dynamics. Also see Timothy Snyder, “The Elusive Civic Subject in Russian History”, *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 7, 3 (2006), pp. 609-617.

⁸⁸ J. Arch Getty, Gabor Rittersporn and Viktor Zemskov, “Victims of the Soviet Penal System in the Pre-War Years: A First Approach on the Basis of the Archival Evidence,” *American Historical Review* 98, 4 (1993), pp. 1017-1049.

was the internal passport. The regime of passportization was established in 1932, continuing unreformed up to 1953. It had double function: to count (*uchet*) and to cleanse (*ochistit'*). David Shearer stated that

a passport fixed an individual occupationally, ethnically, and socially through categories written into the document [...] If the system worked correctly a citizen could not have a social identity that was not open to police scrutiny [...] Those who fell into the category of former kulaks or recidivist, as well as members of certain ethnic groups – Germans, Poles, Finns – were never rehabilitated or allowed to repatriate.⁸⁹

Such a system was established in order to administer the identity of the units within the human power (*liudskaia sila*) of the 'first proletarian state'. It functioned as both a means of surveillance and of homogenization. It was an instrument that assessed, directly and by implication, both the loyalty and the status of the "new man." It insured and nourished the possibility for an individual *Gleichschaltung*, politicizing and rationalizing all aspects of one's identity.⁹⁰

Discrimination based upon passport-ascribed identity (substantiated with surveillance reports, confessions, denunciations, past personal history, work status, etc.) brings us to the dichotomy nature vs. nurture⁹¹ in relation with the Soviet body politic. There are two prerequisites for the analysis of identity within this framework: a Lamarckian vision of society and Marxism-Leninism as a *sociological* science. The hierarchies established under Stalinism within community and in relation to the state reflected a fundamental preeminence of nurture over nature. The health of the metabolism of the party, the state, the Soviet society, and of the

⁸⁹ David Shearer, "Elements Near and Alien: Passportization, Policing, and Identity in the Stalinist State, 1932-1952", *The Journal of Modern History*, 76 (December 2004), pp. 8835-881.

⁹⁰ David Shearer stresses the fact that "it was only after the ideological catharsis of the war and the bureaucratic separation of the political and civil police that the regime again treated criminality and other social deviances as social problems and not as political threats." Shearer, *Elements...*, pp. 878.

⁹¹ Some of the valuable contributions on this topic are Yuri Slezkine, *Arctic Mirrors: Russia and the Small Peoples of the North* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994); Terry Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire: Nations and Nationalism in the Soviet Union, 1923-1939* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001); Amir Weiner, *Making Sense of War: the Second World War and the Fate of the Bolshevik Revolution* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2001); Ronald Grigor Suny and Terry Martin eds., *A State of Nations: Empire and Nation-Making in the Age of Lenin and Stalin* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002); Francine Hirsch, *Empire of Nations: Ethnographic Knowledge & The Making of the Soviet Union* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005);

new man was dependent upon “an all-encompassing drive to purify the socio-national body.” (Weiner) However, the system of surveillance in place and the end of class antagonism coupled with the breakneck drive for state-building (the inception of the Five-Year Plans) under circumstances of permanent shortage determined a shift within identitarian dynamics in the Soviet Union. Again, in the words of A. Weiner “with socialism built, ethnic hostility replaced class antagonism as the primary category intruding on harmony [...] the ethnicization of categories intensified the drive to homogenize the Soviet body social.”⁹² But the most important ingredient to the mix was the permanent war scare during Stalin’s reign: the notions of anti-social element and of enemy of the people gained a new meaning in reference to one’s membership to an ethnic community component of the Soviet ‘empire of nations.’

“Soviet xenophobia” was based upon two phenomena: “the coincidence of status and ethnic divisions with the conflicts over land and territory, some of the most important diaspora nationalities (Koreans, Germans, Finns, Poles),” which led to sociological stigmatization by both central and local authorities of these nationalities. And, “the Soviet belief in the political salience of ethnicity” led to the Bolshevik party’s “attempt to exploit cross-border ethnic ties, to project the influence abroad - [the Piedmont Principle]. However, the exaggerated Soviet fear of foreign capitalist influence and contamination combined with strategic territorialization also made such cross-border ties potentially suspect.”⁹³ Amir Weiner in his study of identity politics during the Second World War hints to this interpretation when analyzing the ascribed position of the Jews

⁹² Amir Weiner, “Nature, Nurture, and Memory in a Socialist Utopia: Delineating the Soviet Socio-Ethnic Body in the Age of Socialism”, *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 104, No. 4 (Oct., 1999), pp. 1114-1155.

⁹³ I am extending here Terry Martin’s definition of Soviet xenophobia. He defines it only as being identified to be foreign in relation to the Soviet brotherhood of peoples. I added the facet of being shelved as alien based upon the perceived dominant social practices of your ethnic group. I see both features of xenophobia form the standpoint of their identical result: an ethnic group becomes a hated and maybe dispensable *other*. See Terry Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire*, pp. 341-343. For an excellent survey of this issue see Vladimir Tismaneanu, *Stalinism for all Seasons...*, Robert Levy, *Ana Pauker: the Rise and Fall of a Jewish Communist* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), and Pavel Câmpeanu, *Ceașescu, anii numărătorii inverse* (București: Polirom, 2002).

in the war narrative. The Jews were refused a discourse of suffering and overcoming because, among other things, of their perceived immutable petit-bourgeois behavior, cosmopolitanism, and ultimately socio-political backwardness. He makes a very important point, which I consider worth transposing upon the Romanian case: “if the myth of the October Revolution was perceived as Judaized beyond repair, then the new myth of the Great Patriotic War would not suffer the same fate.”⁹⁴ Two of the identitarian *topoi* in inter-war Romania were that of Judeokomuna and of the *alien* communist element. This discourse was rejuvenated officially in communist Romania starting with November 1961, as the Romanian communist Party constructed its legitimacy in contradistinction with the errors of the party-line in the past (e.g., the fallacy of the Comintern and the antinational stand toward the unitary nation-state). I believe that one of the lines of ethnic discrimination originated in this historiographical build-up. The new narrative of Romanian communism’s self-reliance/creation and its newly found (late fifties and early sixties) national mission/calling presupposed invariably deep suspicion toward minority groups. It was by no means a coincidence that the representatives of the latter sections of the population and/or of the party were identified as the sole responsible for wrong-doings against the Nation during the early years of communism (either underground or in power). It suffices to remember Gheorghiu-Dej’s injunctions against Marcel Pauker, Boris Ștefanov, Ștefan Foris, Ana Pauker, or Vasile Luca, “elements foreign to the Romanian people.” Nicolae Ceaușescu will only continue and perfect this practice, his main contribution being that he brought the spirit of the party as far the ancient times. At the reopening of the Museum of Party History in 1966, visitors were greeted by the watchful and imposing busts of Decebalus (the Dacian king) and Trajan (the Roman emperor), characters considered as founding fathers of the

⁹⁴ Amir Weiner, “When Memory Counts: War, Genocide, and Postwar Soviet Jewry” in Igal Halfin (ed.) *Language and Revolution. Making Modern Political Identities* (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 2002), p. 188.

Romanian people. The bottom-line though is that under circumstances of permanent insecurity and fear of the enemy from within, either in the Soviet Union, Romania, Albania, or Poland, party and national history integrated xenophobia as means of self-legitimization.⁹⁵

Therefore, in the context of war and by the diktat of *raison d'état*, under Stalin (setting a model for future Eastern European communist leaders), what was suspect became potentially lethal to the health of the Soviet body social, thus suffering indiscriminate excision (physical, symbolic, or/and administrative). Starting with 1930s, especially from 1935 onwards, the USSR officially became a space of ethnic cleansing. The category of “enemy nation” was institutionalized becoming a constant of the purge ‘publics’.⁹⁶ If the policies of *korenisatsiia* legitimized an ethnic identity by granting it territory, government, elites, culture, and language the withdrawal of these grants would automatically “denationalize” that community.⁹⁷ Its members bearing individual passports prescribing their ethnicity suffered a wholesale loss of

⁹⁵ At the same time, in Romania, by the beginning of the 1960s a strange situation appeared: “a continuous process of marginalization [within the party and in leadership positions] that was accelerated in the 1970s and 1980s – which, paradoxically, was accompanied by an improvement in the status of Jewish community life.” The end result of these practices was quite similar to that in Poland during the conflict between W. Gomulka and M. Moczar: the emigration of the Jews and the homogenization of the nation. Leon Volovici remarked that Nicolae Ceaușescu’s nationalist doctrine viewed the voluntary departure of the German and Jewish populations as the best and most profitable way both to remove “foreigners” from positions of influence and to “ameliorate” the country’s ethnic mix. [...] Romanian Jewry attained a favored minority status whose main privilege, paradoxically, was the freedom to leave.” See Leon Volovici, “Romanian Jewry under Rabbi Moses Rosen during the Ceaușescu Regime,” pp. 181-192 in Ezra Mendelsohn (ed.), *Jews and the State: Dangerous Alliances and the Perils of Privilege* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003) and Leszek W. Gluchowski and Antony Polonsky (eds.), *Polin. Studies in Polish Jewry. 1968 Forty Years After*, vol. 21 (Oxford/Portland, Or: The Litman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2009).

⁹⁶ For example, a January 31, 1938 politburo decree extended until April 15, 1938 branded the “national operations” as one aimed at “the destruction of espionage and sabotage contingents made up of Poles, Latvians, Germans, Estonians, Finns, Greeks, Iranians, Kharbintsy, Chinese, and Romanians, both foreign subjects and Soviet citizens, according to the existing decrees of the NKVD. This decree also authorized a new operation “to destroy the Bulgarian and Macedonian cadres.” See Terry Martin, *Affirmative Action...*, pp. 337.

⁹⁷ Another mechanism of constructing identity was the census. Entire nationalities could disappear from one census to the other, as for example the differences between census lists of nationalities from 1926 to 1939. On this interpretation and on more general assessments of demographic politics in the Soviet Union under Stalin see Alain Blum, “Society, Politics and Demography. The Example of Soviet History”, *Czech Sociological Review*, vol. 4, No. 1 (1996), pp. 81-95 and Alain Blum, “Social History as History of Measuring Populations. A Post-1987 Renewal”, in Peter Holquist, Michael David-Fox, and Marshall Poe, *After the Fall* (Bloomington: Slavica Publishers, 2004), pp. 64-83.

identity (by suspension of citizenship rights and/or imprisonment/deportation) or were left to attempt integration by means of class, status, occupation, or gender identifiers.⁹⁸ Under the circumstances, “the national line in Soviet passports became one of the single most important factors in not only reinforcing the belief, but also creating the social fact, that national identity was primordial and inherited.”⁹⁹

This process of presupposing, from the part of entire nationalities, disloyalty to the Soviet state and to the Bolshevik revolutionary project produced, in ethnic terms, “multiple maps of ‘they’ and no clear definition of the hegemonic ‘we’.” (Alfred J. Rieber) However, one of the effects of these ‘national operations’ was to identify the state with the Russian core. And, as historian Andres Umland noticed, once a dominant people appears than the question of “who is not or should not be, at the center of the system” was directly connected to the issue of “what or who will be (re-)located to this new system’s periphery.”¹⁰⁰ In the Soviet Union the consolidation of the Russian core happened along three paths: the formation of the Russian national space through the Russification of the RSFSR; the elevation of the status and unifying role of the Russian culture within the entire USSR; the integration of the newly central Russians into the preexistent Soviet national constitution through the metaphor of the Friendship of Peoples as first among equals.¹⁰¹ A nucleus of the Soviet community was thus born.

In Romania, a similar process unfolded gradually; the first sings appeared in mid-1950s as national traditions became more and more prominent accompanied by a wave of

⁹⁸ Yuri Slezkine, “The USSR as a Communal Apartment, or How a Socialist State Promoted Ethnic Particularism”, *Slavic Review*, Vol. 53, No. 2 (Summer, 1994), pp. 414-452.

⁹⁹ Terry Martin, “Modernization or Neo-Traditionalism: Ascribed Nationality and Soviet Primordialism”, pp. 355, in Fitzpatrick ed., *Stalinism...*, 348-367. Golfo Alexopoulos makes a similar point in arguing that the passport made nationality into an inheritable identity for the Soviet citizen with all its implications upon the status the individual in society and upon its relation toward the state (see “Soviet citizenship, More or Less....”)

¹⁰⁰ Andreas Umland, 'Stalin's Russocentrism in Historical and International Context', *Nationalities Papers*, 38: 5 (2010).

¹⁰¹ Martin. *Affirmative Action...*, pp. 394.

rehabilitations of ‘has-beens’ in the scientific establishment of the regime. Despite the upsurge of purges during 1958 and 1960, the communist regime consolidated itself creating a system of planned science that successfully concentrated all ‘productive and creative forces’ for the purpose of crystallizing a new identity for a polity that increasingly showed tendency toward individuality within the Soviet bloc. On the one hand, shock waves of the Hungarian Revolution in Romania produced a renewed emphasis on loyalty, national interest, and homogenization (as a means of ensuring stability). From 1957, the Hungarian minority lost most of its cultural autonomy.¹⁰² This phenomenon was simultaneous to a consolidation of leadership in the party by means of eliminating and demonizing party elements deemed unfaithful to the RWP (RCP) and alien to the Romanian socialist nation. Last but not least, a good communist also became synonymous to a good Romanian. By the beginning of the 1960s, the historical front formulated with the support of the ideologues and censors from the Department of Propaganda and Culture the main tenets of an ethno-centric national narrative. In 1965, at the Ninth Party Congress, the new general secretary, Nicolae Ceaușescu announced the inception of the national great project of social engineering: the multilaterally developed socialist society – the RCP’s own version of socialism in one country, the apex of communism’s transition to self-centeredness in Romania since 1955.

In the Soviet Union, the history and the population of the country gravitated around an ethnic group endowed with both the best capability of building and defending socialism and a proven historical preeminence either across the Soviet territory or upon the world stage. The Soviet Union was not Russified, but the Russians became the populational model of *proveshchenie* (enlightenment), *vospitanie*, *kul’turnost’*, and *natsionalisatsiia*. This process of

¹⁰² Ștefano Botoni, *Transilvania roșie. Comunismul roman și problema națională 1944-1965* (Criterion: Cluj-Napoca, 2010).

rapprochement (*sblizhenie*) of national cultures and their mutual enrichment upon Russian motifs¹⁰³ combined with exclusion on the basis of the category “enemy nation” gave birth to a hybrid identity marker characterized by a essentializing discourse of “national authenticity”. It was a form of patriotism relying upon a “national Bolshevism” that accepted the progressive role of historical Russian state-building and celebrated the role of the individual in history (also part and parcel of the Stalin personality cult). The result was a “new Stalinist ideology national in form, etatist in content.”¹⁰⁴ Soviet patriotism was the expression of “a self-reliant state development, rejecting borrowing and kowtowing to things foreign, that realized the unique potential of the people [...] Pride was taken in the Russian and the Soviet state for their being the foremost agents of socio-economic progress. As the proletariat was de-emphasized in relation to the ‘people’, there was a shift from rivalry of socio-economic systems to rivalry of nations.”¹⁰⁵ This blueprint will then be emulated in Romania allowing for a re-invention of the local communist regime to a nationalist tune.

Up until now I indicated the following markers of identity under Stalinism: class, status, gender, occupation, and nationality. They were integrated in a primordial definition of citizenship which ultimate measuring stick was the level of commitment (by participation and faith) to the project of building socialism in a national context. The intricate interaction of these

¹⁰³ At the level of Soviet historiography one of the examples of this phenomenon is the theory of the ‘lesser evil’ when approaching tsarist colonial history. See Konstantin F. Shteppa, *Russian Historians* or Lowell Tillet, *The Great Friendship: Soviet Historians and the Non-Russian Nationalities* (Chapel Hill: University of North California Press, 1969).

¹⁰⁴ David Brandenberger and A.M. Dubrovsky, “‘The People Need a Tsar’: The Emergence of National Bolshevism as Stalinist Ideology, 1931-1941”, *Europe-Asia Studies* 5 (1998). D. Brandenberger also argues for a “Russo-Soviet hybridization” ultimately confirmed by “the victory in 1945, as the ultimate validation of Soviet state-building, most striking when styled as a feat *without* historical precedent”. The Great Patriotic War became a symbolic mediator of collective identity, opening the door for a partial forgoing from the late 1930s and 1940s Russocentrism. See David Brandenberger, *National Bolshevism – Stalinist Mass and the Formation of Modern Russian National Identity, 1931 – 1956*, (Cambridge/London: Harvard University Press, 2002), pp. 183-196.

¹⁰⁵ Erik van Ree, “Stalin as Marxist: the Western Roots of Stalin’s Russification of Marxism”, pp. 177-178, in Davis & Harris eds., *Stalin...*, pp. 159- 180. Also Erik van Ree, *The Political Thought of Joseph Stalin – A Study in Twentieth-Century Patriotism* (London/New York: RoutledgeCurzon), 2002, pp. 269-275.

elements within the political practices targeting the state and the individual was regulated by an exhaustive system of planning, surveillance, affiliation, purge, and acculturation. The logic of an individual's identity was fundamentally determined by the ideologically presupposed physiognomy and metabolism of the society as a whole. This radical intrusiveness was eschatologically motivated: the progress of the socialist community, characterized by a moral-political unity and self-reliant realization, can be fulfilled and continued across history only if all souls have been reformed or if those that proved incorrigible have eliminated. As the "I's" merged in order to build an organization with one completely unified will (the charismatic-impersonal party of a new type), so the citizen's features melted into the necessity for a continuous advancement of the "popular socialist state" (Erik van Ree). Did such thing happen? Obviously no; the undifferentiated self and non-stratified society were discursive fictions. But the project did exist and was purposively pursued during Stalin's reign, as well as in Romania under Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej and Nicolae Ceaușescu with radical and lasting consequences.

The most distinctive aspect of Stalinism remains this 'etatization' of utopia: identity was ascribed in accordance to developmental tasks with the goal of homogenization. The criteria of its recognition were that of systemic loyalty and revolutionary purity. Upon the end of class struggle, allegiance increasingly came under the guise of a patriotism motivated by the "building of socialism in one country." Membership in the body social pioneering the construction of the most advanced polity was ultimately the basis for personal dignity. And when this superiority of 'historiosophical vision' translated itself into a re-imagination of community, the narrative turned into perennialist formulations about the 'Nation'.

Under the circumstance, national Stalinism must be perceived not only the point of view of self-determination – the right for implementing this specific type of civilization within a local

context – but also by means of understanding the way the individual – the object and subject of radical transformation - was defined. Starting with the sixties, the socialist citizen in Romania became an agent fulfilling the salvational potential of history. He contributed to “the continuous flourishing of the socialist society, at the elevation of the Romanian people’s life to the greatest heights of civilization.” At the same time, the party took on the duty to embody “the will and aspirations of freedom and independence of the masses” and “to unite all the national forces with the purpose of capitalizing the country’s human and material potential.”¹⁰⁶ Subsequently, national Stalinism became the ideological medium by which citizens were molded into “historical agents who understood the laws of history and acted on their behalf. Hence, the orientation toward individual ‘consciousness’, their ‘souls,’ as the decisive realm in which the new man became manifest.”¹⁰⁷ The fundamental change undergone by the communist regime in Romania, at the beginning of the sixties, was that the voluntaristic anthropological ideal of the Stalinist state increasingly manifested itself by reference to a national mission. The basic unit of human behavior was not merely the socialist citizen, but it was the Romanian consciously constructing socialism. And, this Romanian’s consciousness was designated as the locus of a transhistorical understanding of the conditionings implied by the uninterrupted Nation’s progress toward the end of history. In 1963, the head of the RWP Central Committee’s Section of Agitation and Propaganda, P. Niculescu Mizil, announced that

The present stage of the completion of socialist construction in our country increases and expands the role and significance of ideological activity undergone by the party, of the political and educational work among the people [...] The political and educational activity must contribute, first and foremost, to the development of the technological and material development basis of socialism, to the accomplishment of the tasks concerning the

¹⁰⁶ „Expunerea tov. Nicolae Ceaușescu, secretar general al CC al PCR la adunarea festivă cu prilejul aniversării a 45 de ani de la crearea Partidului Comunist Român”, 7 mai, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, 29/1966, f.68 and f. 70.

¹⁰⁷ Peter Fritzsche and Jochen Hellbeck, “The New Man in Stalinist Russia and Nazi Germany,” in Geyer and Fitzpatrick, *Beyond Totalitarianism* ..., p.314

achievement of the realities of socialist production in our country, to the elevation of the socialist consciousness of the new man, to his/her political, moral, and specialized preparedness (*pregatire*) [...] We will focus more on the study of the party's history, of the problems of the statute of our party, on a greater development of patriotic education, of the love for the socialist order, for the party and the Motherland, to the intensification of internationalist education.¹⁰⁸

These indications given to the party *activ* were the coordinates of the ideological program for years to come in communist Romania. Their national focus increased as the party accentuated its self-centeredness and claims for autochthonous-ness. However, I believe that it would be misleading to consider, as Katherine Verdery did, that “the Marxist discourse was decisively disrupted by that of the Nation.”¹⁰⁹ Under circumstances of the assertion of socialist sovereignty (essentially, the party's right to plan economic, social, or cultural development along with the non-interference in internal politics and the autonomy in international relations), the Romanian communist party's Marxist-Leninist program of modernization was re-situated on the foundation of national authenticity along with maintaining its internationalist credentials.

I contend that the Nation was appended to “the Marxist discourse” of radical transformation of Romanian society. In the process, the space for legitimacy and individual internalization was greatly expanded. The Nation became a central symbol of Romanian Stalinist culture not because of the abandonment of socialism but on the basis of its purported realization. It was the key for the unified culture for the entire Romanian population.¹¹⁰ Once the RWP

¹⁰⁸ “Stenograma expunerii lui P. Niculescu-Mizil privind probleme ale muncii politico-educative a partidului”, 17 decembrie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.44/1963, f. 1, f. 6, f. 10.

¹⁰⁹ Verdery, *National Ideology...*, p. 124. Throughout her book Verdery refers to “Marxist discourse” without specifying the meaning of this formulation. Marxism in communist Romania was Marxism-Leninism as reflected from Stalinist understandings of dialectical and historical materialism. Marxism in this country was the discourse of nationalization, crush industrialization and collectivization, of terror and massive state violence/coercion, of radical social engineering, and all the other aspects of the communist regime in Romania founded upon the ideology it advocated. In my opinion, it is misleading, the least to say, to use such vague formulation for it comes dangerously close to misrepresenting the historical experience of communism in Romania from 1945 to 1989.

¹¹⁰ I am adjusting for the Romanian case one of the main ideas of David Hoffmann's critique of Nicholas Timasheff's concept of “the great retreat”. See David Hoffmann, *Stalinist Values: The Cultural Norms of Soviet Modernity* (Ithaca/London: Cornell University Press, 2003), pp. 3-5 and pp. 170-171. I will discuss in my conclusion the possibility of applying Timasheff's “great retreat” to the case of Romania.

declared to have built the groundwork of socialism, it became possible to conceive of a people united and organically whole. Moreover, such conceptualization of the social body was itself a process rooted in, as Tismaneanu duly emphasized, the specific evolution of Romanian communism in the aftermath of de-Stalinization.

Under Stalinism, the Soviet political community became analogous to other nation-making projects, with the caveat that the term “nation” was given up on.¹¹¹ In Romania, starting with the end of the fifties and the beginning of the sixties, the party increasingly placed itself at the center of a nationalizing nation-state. It did so under circumstances of perceived pressure from the Soviet hegemon and its ‘allies’ against its own understanding of building socialism in one country. In contrast to the Soviet case, the Nation came back because the RWP/RCP re-invented itself primarily under circumstance of an encirclement of competing visions of socialist construction and sovereignty. First, the Nation re-enforced the communist regime’s insulation from change within the Soviet bloc and the world communist movement. Only later, by way of cumulative implementation of Stalinist modernization did the RCP reach a discourse of autarchy based on a full vision of international encirclement, both from the East and the West. In last analysis, it could be argued that the Nation was employed within the Romanian communist polity as *differentia specifica* in order to justify the continuous advocacy of individuality and exceptionalism.

Stalinism was a civilizational model primarily focused upon legitimizing the building and the survival of a state through the instrumentalization of a myriad of interchangeable, cross-identitarian hierarchies that merged into a popular socialist community. Similarly, the political practice and the historical narrative of the “socialist nation” in Romania circumscribed spaces for

¹¹¹ See Ronald Grigor Suny and Terry Martin, “Introduction”, pp. 3-20 and Joshua Sanbron, “Family, Fraternity, and Nation-Building in Russia, 1905-1925”, pp. 93-110 in Suny and Martin (eds.), *A State of Nations...*

the individuals' belief exercitation and incantation, providing the justificatory fuel of the state socialism's reproduction. They also allowed an entire profession and discipline – the so-called “historical front” - to regain its missionary zeal on the altar of a Romanian nation which it unitarily conceived within an “empty homogenous time” (W. Benjamin).

In the aftermath of the condemnation of the communist regime in Romania, one political scientist remarked in 2007 that

...on the other hand, a fundamental reason for the difficulty to pursue this initiative [the condemnation of the communist regime] is *the undeniable fact* that the communist period in Romania overlaps with *an important epoch of accomplishments with a view to the nation-building* of Romania, of the consolidation of the nation-state. Any attempt that can be seen to be questioning these achievements obviously generates controversy and meets with resistance from a significant section of public opinion. It is clear that this phase of the strengthening of the unitary nation-state [...] cannot be doubted.”¹¹² [my italics]

The benefits of using the conceptual and comparative lenses of ‘national Stalinism’ are apparent in understanding the hermeneutics and methodological prejudice of the above statement. Its first layer consists of the premise that the evolution of the nation can have its own dynamic in relation to the communist state. The second layer is represented by the presupposition that the evolution of the nation-state can be distinguished from the development of the communist polity. The third, that individual membership within the national community automatically implies autonomous niches of the self, surviving pure, unaltered decades of communist socialization. And forth (at least), that undifferentiated redemption comes with the collective belonging, which shielded aspects of self-realization from the ‘abnormality’ of communist reality. In contrast to such perceptions of national and personal attainment, I chose a conceptualization of identity as inextricably infused with the imperatives particularizing the progress of the socialist body, political and social, across present and historical time. If I were to rephrase the above quote along these theoretical lines, I would rather say that some of the opposition or reservations to

¹¹² “Raportul Comisiei Tismaneanu in dezbaterile istoricilor clujeni”, *Tribuna*, nr. 119, 16-31 august 2007, p.19.

declaring the communist regime as “criminal and illegitimate” originated in the reality of the self’s stake in a belief system which moved a whole society into Party guided action inscribed by a particular version of modernity that itself bore the marks of centuries-long national obsessions of both marginality and exceptionalism.

Part One: Institutions, Personnel, Policies (1955-1963)

I

The Romanian Academy and the Historical Front

1948 versus 1955

The starting point of the institutionalization and centralization of history production in Romania under communism is the year 1948. At the time, the Academy turned into an enormous institution with several sectors/sections covering all the recognized sciences, history included. This initial stage was part and parcel of the so-called “Sovietization” of Romania (also known in the literature as “High Stalinism”). The Academy was to become the pinnacle of a pyramidal system, an omnipotent institution which aim was to “bring science closer to life” (*nauka v zhizn'*). However, a second look at this institution’s development throughout the communist period reveals a much more complicated picture. Several stages of re-organization generated alternative functionalities and roles for the Academy (implicitly, for its institutes of history-production as well). The Academy was one of the crucial arenas for the ups-and-downs of the continuity-change process under communism. It was among the first spaces for an upswing

towards a “national turn”¹. Moreover, it was the hub of historical syntheses and of historians’ aggregation.

As early as spring 1945, the agitation and propaganda department of the communist party’s central committee indicated that “a structural reorganization of education was imperative” and that such endeavor had to take into account “USSR’s vast experience in the field.”² In the communist cultural revolutionary project higher-education went hand in hand with the system of scientific research. Moreover, just like it happened throughout the entire Eastern Europe, the scientific field was transformed on the basis of two “twin tools”: defasciszation (in Germany, denazification) and democratization.³ These two policies were part and parcel of the communist-defined plan for ensuring sustainable peace in the postwar era: “the establishment of a spirit of cohabitation and collaboration among all peoples; the elimination of all fascist remnants; the establishment of a true (*consecvențe*) democracy in each country; the respect for each people’s will to decide on its own the social order (*regim social*), the recognition of national independence and the non-interference in other peoples’ internal affairs.”⁴ Under the circumstances, specificities and similarities in the politics of knowledge under circumstances of Sovietization in Romania depended on the capacity of the communist party to breakthrough or accommodate to the existing environment. As Carol Lilly remarked for the case of Yugoslavia, “postwar policies reflect the party's struggle to find and hold a balance between its long-term goal of transforming society and culture and its immediate political and economic needs, between

¹ By “national turn” I understand the process of gradual appropriation of the Nation as a master symbol by the regime. In my opinion, it started in the second half of the 1950s and it was completed in 1966. This phenomenon affected all sectors of the party-state and each and every walk of life.

² „Raport asupra situației învățământul”, 20 aprilie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, 21/1945, f. 3.

³ Connelly, *Captive Universities*, pp. 8-9.

⁴ „Îndreptar pentru prelucrarea raportului C.C. la Conferința Națională a P.C.R. din 15 octombrie 1945”, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, 21/1945, f. 4.

its revolutionary desire for change and its pragmatic need for security and stability.”⁵ The combination between radical change and limited adaptation will not only give a certain profile to the Romanian case in the late forties, but it will also set the ground for later developments, in the second half of the fifties.

The aim of this first chapter is to describe the initial development along the lines of this ambivalent epistemic state of affairs in Romania under communism. The historical field will be my trial run. I will first analyze the blueprint upon which the Academy of the Romanian Popular Republic was built, while simultaneously attempting to give some hints about the Soviet interpretation of the idea of “planned science”. I will then turn to the evolution of the RPR Academy focusing on both instances of institutional reform and on election years. I counterpose two crucial juncture points in the evolution of higher-education: 1948 and 1955. Both are peak moments of confirmation and restructuring of the regime’s ‘knowledge elite’. I argue that establishing a connection between personnel dynamics and organizational premises within scientific communities (in my case, historians) can provide at least two important results. First, it reveals the seeds of change into the direction of a ‘national turn’ within the higher education system. Second, it offers a context that helps one better understand the premises for the academia’s widespread regimentation by the regime.

A. Preliminary Remarks on Planned Science

The main model for the Soviet organization of scientific communities was the Kaiser-Wilhelm Gesellschaft developed in Germany in 1911. There was, however, a distinctive institutional twist to it generated by the specific standpoint of the Bolshevik leadership on

⁵ Carol S. Lilly, *Power and Persuasion: Ideology and Rhetoric in Communist Yugoslavia, 1944-1953* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 2001), p.1.

relationship between science and education. This generated the particular structure of knowledge communities in the new Soviet state. The original Humboldtian idea behind the creation of a system of *Hilfs-Institute* led to a three-tier structure of higher education: the Academy, the University, and the research institutes. Within such complex of science-production, the talented professors and/or academicians were free to pursue their research interests. The burden of University teaching was therefore significantly alleviated. State-supported centers of fundamental research were independent from the Academy. The Universities maintained their modern role of *Lehranstalten* [institutions of higher education]. The intention of the initiators of the Kaiser Wilhelm scheme, people such as Adolf Harnack or Rudolf von Valentini, was to safeguard science from the effects of mass education, simultaneously maintaining the Prussian Academy of Sciences as an honorary institution, freed from state bureaucracy and control.⁶ Nevertheless, the Kaiser Wilhelm Society under the Nazis did fall prey to state instrumentalization, or better said, it entered a “Faustian pact” with the National-Socialist regime in which politics and science served as resources for each other.⁷ As we shall see such positioning was far from dissimilar with the Soviet case. The authoritarian temptations of the twentieth century in Europe did alter fundamentally the initial Humboldtian principle that lay at the basis of the modern organization of higher education and research. In Humboldt’s view that state had only two tasks, that is, “to ensure the richness (strength and variety) of intellectual resources through the selection of staff, and to guarantee their freedom to carry out their work.”⁸ However, state interventionism and planning will increasingly gain the upper hand under conditions of the

⁶ Loren R. Graham, “The Formation of Soviet Research Institutes: A Combination of Revolutionary Innovation and International Borrowing”, *Social Studies of Science*, vol 5, no3, (Aug.1975), pp.303-329.

⁷ Susanne Heim, Carola Sachse, and Mark Walker, “The Kaiser Wilhelm Society under National Socialism,” in Susanne Heim, Carola Sachse, and Mark Walker, *The Kaiser Wilhelm Society under National Socialism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 1-16.

⁸ *Apud* Walter Rüegg, “Themes” in Walter Rüegg (ed.), *A History of University in Europe*, vol. IV, *Universities since 1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 12.

realization of political modernity across the entire continent, with the Nazi Germany, the Soviet Union, and post-1945 Eastern Europe as extreme examples.

The Soviet leadership and party affiliated scientists maintained the three-tier project⁹, but decided to attach the most important research institutes to the Academy of Sciences, gradually subordinating (mainly from 1929 onwards) the entire structure to the state. At the same time, the ‘bourgeois’ Universities with their research centers (*VUZy*) were completely disregarded as remnants of the *ancien régime*, nests of has-beens and of counterrevolution. Often times, until mid-1930s, they had to permanently deal with the possibility of immediate disbandment.¹⁰

There were two main reasons behind such organizational setting. The first was the fact that the Bolsheviks conceptualized a “planned science” (main ‘culprit’ Bukharin) that would put itself to use within their project of modernization. Moreover, they wished to rapidly create new elites (‘Red Professors and Academicians’), which were to replace the has-beens that endangered the purity of the new society. Between 1921 and 1929, the Academy of Sciences gradually became a ‘safe-heaven’ for the latter category, a place where they could pursue their research more or less undisturbed by Soviet power. They were, nevertheless, used as ‘bourgeois specialists’ in the training of the new elite of the Soviet state. While the universities became fully exposed from early on to the phenomenon of socialist mass education, the Academy personnel

⁹ For an analysis of the Kaiser-Wilhelm Society in comparison with the uses and abuses of science in Stalin’s Soviet Union during the inter-war period and the Second World War see Carola Sachse and Mark Walker (eds.), *Politics and Science in Wartime: Comparative International Perspectives on the Kaiser Wilhelm Institutes*, Osiris 20 (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2005).

¹⁰ Especially during the civil war and the proletarianization push of what Fitzpatrick coined as the “cultural revolution” of 1928-1931. See Sheila Fitzpatrick, *Cultural Revolution in Russia 1928-1931* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1979).

were involved into developmental projects by means of planned research. This way, an ‘ideal type’ separation was generated between research and pedagogy.¹¹

The second factor which produced the specific profile and functions of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, later to become the institutional model for the new socialist states, was the Bolshevik leadership policy of “merging the national elite with a central planning authority”. According to Michael David-Fox, “the new political power needed all the resources that could be drawn from the sanctions and legitimacy (in scientific and even in other matters) residing in the scientific elite.”¹² The pyramidal, state-controlled and supported, structure of the Academy was the communist answer to the imperative of “putting science at work for the people”. The Academy became a front on the struggle for communist Enlightenment. In the words of a Romanian academician in 1948, it renounced its formal ‘mere’ “honorary and scholarly function, moving away from what it was in the past, a retired gentlemen’s club nostalgic about the past, who were having just pleasant rendezvous on weekly basis.”¹³

At the First All-Union Conference of the Planning of Scientific-Research Work, in April 1931, Nikolai Bukharin listed five directions upon which this structure was to come about. The aspects of science probable to be subjected to planning were: (a) the determination of the share of the country’s budgetary resources which should be devoted to science; (b) the *subjects* of

¹¹ Some of the most important general studies of the evolution of the Soviet Academy of Science are: Loren R. Graham, *The Soviet Academy of Sciences and the Communist Party, 1927-1932* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1967), Alexander Vucinich, *Empire of Knowledge: the Academy of Sciences of the USSR (1917-1970)* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), Vera Tolz, *Russian Academicians and the Revolution: Combining Professionalism and Politics* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1997), Ethan Pollock, *Stalin and the Soviet Science Wars* (Princeton/Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2006).

¹² Michael David-Fox and György Péteri, “On the Origins and Demise of the Communist Academic Regime” in David-Fox and Péteri (eds.), *Academia in Upheaval*, pp.13.

¹³ Speech given by Traian Săvulescu during the May 20th 1948 debate at the Romanian Academy on the 11-point draft of reform he presented in the name of the Scientific Section. This project was to become the basis upon which the Academy of the Popular Republic of Romania was created. See Dan Berindei, *Istoria Academiei Romane (1866-2006)* (Bucuresti: Editura Academiei Romane, 2006), pp. 310-316.

scientific research; (c) the *support* of scientific-research institutions; (d) the geographical placement of scientific-research institutes; and, (e) the determination of the supply of personnel, or “cadres”, in relation to their number, distribution, qualification, and actual activity within specific projects.¹⁴ [my emphasis] The two interconnected fundamental premises behind Bukharin’s (and the Bolshevik) planning the scientific field were: (a) the dyad “practicality-party mindedness”(Michael David-Fox); (b) the “complete absence of any desire to extend knowledge as an end in itself”(Loren Graham). The “planning of science” generated a symbiotic relationship between the academic community, political ideals, and the projects of the communist power. On the one hand, the scientific-field in general, and the Academy in particular, lost its autonomy. On the other, the interest of the communist states to provide the funds for research and project-development led to an unprecedented level of investment into knowledge production.

For example, for the Romanian case, Frederick Kellogg provides the following evaluation: “the new socialist government nurtured the attempts to reinterpret the history of Romanians. It was an era [communist period] of multiple innovations, so numerous that we will brand it as the Mercury Age.”¹⁵ This new “communion of interests between the political and academic elites” will, in time, counter-balanced the periodical purges and the ideological encirclement of scholarly communities. This status quo of knowledge production typical of the Soviet model was tellingly described in 1964 by then president of the RPR Academy: “the planning of research under socialism solves, along with the strict coordination of scientific development in relation with society’s necessities, the issue of creating the most favorable

¹⁴ For a complete description of Bukharin’s speech and of his ideas of planning scientific activity and knowledge see Loren R. Graham, “Bukharin and the Planning of Science”, *Russian Review*, vol.23, no.2 (Apr., 1964), pp. 135-148.

¹⁵ Frederick Kellogg, *A History of Romanian Historical Writing* (Bakersfield, CA: Charles Schlacke, Jr. Pu., 1990), pp.83.

conditions for the progress of science.”¹⁶ Indeed, central coordination, massive funding, infrastructural development, status benefits and other privileges will create a context that will be increasingly appealing for various epistemic communities, easing their integration within the structures of systemic reproduction under communism. If one is to add the so-called “Harnack principle”¹⁷ into the mix, it seems to become more palatable why under communism scientists often flourished rather than suffered.

B. The Transformation of the Romanian Academy

The period elapsed between the transformation of the Academy (1948) and the XIth Congress of the Romanian Communist Party (1974) represents, in my opinion, a cycle during which the institutional transfers from the Soviet Union gradually became deeply intertwined with a recuperation of the local Academy’s traditions of science organization. By 1976, a hybrid organizational framework was in place with a distribution of responsibilities and benefits sharply different from the 1948 starting point. The Academy regained an honorary role, one however based now on prestige rather than on the actual coordination of the planning of science. At the

¹⁶ Ilie Murgulescu, „Rolul științei în societatea socialistă”, *Revista de filozofie*, an XI (1964), nr. 4, p. 449. Murgulescu also pointed out the features of the planning of science, which I will list here for the sake of comparison with those provided by Bukharin: a) the establishment of themes and their correlation with socio-economic requirements; b) the delianation of the research networks; c) the recruitment, specialization, and training of cadres; d) th creation of the material basis for research and the financing of scientific units proportionally to their research tasks; e) norms for the full capitalization of research results. As we can see, not much had changed between 1931 in the Soviet Union and 1964 in Romania on the matter of conceptualizing the planning of science. One should note though that Bukharin’s views on planning also included the adjustment to spontaneity. In 1928, Bukharin insisted on balancing planning with “organized mismanagement”, that is, “directives from the center should be confined t formulating the task in general terms; the specific working out is the business of lower agencies, which act in accordance with the actual conditions of life.” See Stephen F. Cohen, *Bukharin and the Bolshevik Revolution: A Political Biography, 1888-1938* (New York: Vintage Books, 1971), p. 319.

¹⁷ The “Harnack principle” meant “taking an excellent scientist, giving him generous resources and support, and lttting him determine the research direction of his institute. Obviously, under communism there were often limitations on the freedom of deciding the research agenda, but a defining feature of the system was that once a scientist’s activity/work was considered strategic by the regime, he would have extensive resources for his research. See Rüdiger Hachtmann, “A Success Story? Highlighting the History of the Kaiser Wilhelm Society’s General Administration in the Third Reich”, in Heim, Sachse, and Walker, *The Kaiser Wilhelm Society*, p. 21.

same time, the University's productive and symbolic functions were rejuvenated, as compared to late 1940s or early 1950s. By the beginning of the third decade of 'state socialism', the research institutes were already drifting toward the latter's area of influence. Simultaneously, new institutions of party-state supervision and coordination appeared: the Council for Socialist Culture and Education¹⁸ and the National Council for Science and Technology.

The 'Sovietization' of the Romanian Academy was officialized by the June 9, 1948 law. It became the Academy of the People's Republic of Romania (R.P.R). It was reorganized into 6 sections and 25 subsections. The law gave priority to the natural and applied sciences, placing the socio-human sciences last in rank of importance. During the first two decades of the communist regime, the Academy and its scientific network grew considerably, from 7 research facilities with nearly 400 scientific collaborators in 1948 to 56 institutes or centers with about 2,500 employees in 1966. At the time of this initial 1948 transformation, the Historical Section added other specialties, and became the Section of Historical Sciences, Philosophical Sciences, Economic and Legal Sciences. It bore this title until 1965, when it reverted to the name of Historical Section. In 1949, the Section began to direct subordinate research institutes, such as those of history and those of archaeology in Bucharest, Iasi and Cluj, to which the Institute of South Eastern European Studies was later added. In time, several institutes of research in social sciences and the humanities where the relative weight of the historical sciences was greater, such as, for example, those in Sibiu, Târgu Mureș and Craiova, also came under its direction.

The hegemony of the Romanian Academy suffered a serious blow in 1969 when a decision of the Council of Ministers removed 12 institutes and centers of medical research (in Bucharest, Cluj, Iași, Timișoara and Târgu Mureș) from the system of the Academy and placed

¹⁸ Vladimir Tismaneanu *et al.*, *Comisia Prezidențială pentru Analiza Dictaturii Comuniste din România – Raport Final* (București: Humanitas, 2007), pp. 403-408.

them under the direction of the Academy of Medical Sciences. After 1970, a newly founded Academy of Social and Political Sciences absorbed all of the Academy's institutes of socio-human sciences. In 1974, the modifications of the Academy's code of bylaws put it under the direction of the National Council for Science and Technology. In the course of the same year, the Academy was stripped of all of its remaining institutes in Bucharest and other major cities - institutes of mathematics, statistics, geography, linguistics, literary history, folklore, the Astronomical Observatory and others. These were redistributed to the ministries of education and culture. However, in what concerns the community of historians, the Academy still retained a crucial institution that contained an important incentive element. I am referring here to the Committee of the Romanian Historians, which regulated the relationship between Romanian and foreign historians and it administered the Romanian historians' participation at international congresses. This body was continuing a pre-communist practice and structure. It was reorganized under communism in the proximity of the 1955 Rome International Congress of Historical Sciences, which registered the first 'outing' of Romanian historians after the communist takeover.

In 1948, numerous acting, associate and honorary members were expelled from the Academy, since they were deemed unfit for the new cultural and scientific orientations and therefore hostile to the communist regime. The Academy restructured by the new regime had 66 members nominated by presidential decree; they were dispersed into 6 scientific sections. From amongst the former members of the Academy, 19 had been kept as acting members and 15 as honorary members; most were specialists in theoretical and applied sciences. The transformation of the Academy was done through the marginalization the members of the section for historical, juridical, economic studies and philosophy with the help of the prominent academicians from the

scientific section. The debates within the ‘old’ Academy about the necessity of reform reflective to the new socio-political conditions in the country coincided with the public campaigns against some of its members. They were targets of incessant negative media coverage (of communist or of other ‘progressist’ political coloring). It did not help, of course, that some of them were indeed, to various degrees, compromised by their political loyalties or administrative positions either during late 1930s and/or the Second World War. In this context, establishing a truly national culture and science in postwar Romania, implied, in the books of the communist party “taking cultural life out of the hands of elitist capitalists and transferring it to a wider society led by the working class.”¹⁹

The pattern of reform and take-over bears similarities with the events that took place in the Soviet Union in late 1920s and the first half of the 1930s. There, the first targets of Bolshevik authorities’ and its newspapers were the Permanent Historical-Archeographical Commission [PIAK], the Pushkin House, and the library.²⁰ The Soviet academicians came under the scrutiny of the Fignater Commission, subordinated to the Leningrad Regional Workers’ and Peasants’ Inspectorate (RKI). The latter was supposed to identify the “wreckers” and the anti-Soviet elements among the institution’s membership and employees. The aims of the press campaign and of the control bodies were: (i) to annihilate the existing autonomy of the Academy, (ii) to identify the counterrevolutionary elements, (iii) to promote Red-membership, and (iv) to integrate the activities and role of the Academy within the general campaign of planned transformation of the society and the economy. Reaching such objectives became imperative

¹⁹ Bradley F. Abrams, *“The Struggle for the Soul of the Nation”: Czech Culture and the Rise of Communism* (New York/Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers Inc., Harvard Cold War Book Series, 2004), p. 94.

²⁰ for the complete description of the 1927-1930 events see Aleksey E. Levin, “Expedient Catastrophe: A Reconsideration of the 1929 Crisis at the Soviet Academy of Science”, *Slavic Review*, Vol. 47, No. 2 (Summer, 1988), pp. 261-279.

particularly after Stalin's November 1929 article in which he stated that "a great break on all the fronts of Socialist construction" had taken place – the beginning of the First Five-Year Plan. By 1934, the Academy of Sciences was transferred from Leningrad to Moscow and was placed under the direct jurisdiction of the Council of People's Commissars. Different institutes for scientific research, which had been organized earlier by the Soviet government, were incorporated into the Academy. In 1936, the research institutes of the Communist Academy were also added to the Academy of Sciences. It thus became the leading scientific institution in all spheres of knowledge.²¹

To return to the Romanian case, indeed the Achilles' heel for members of the Academy and university professors (some of them holding both positions) was their involvement into governmental structures from 1938 to 1944. This weakness of the Romanian epistemic communities in the second half of the 1940s will provide the pretext both for reform and purge. In the newspaper *Contemporanul* (October 14th, 1947), V. Enăchescu argued that "the great names of Romanian higher education formed two categories: 'sentenced war criminals', such as prof. A. Marcu, and 'war criminals not trialed yet', such as Ion Petrovici, Ghe Brătianu, Sextil Pușcariu."²² Furthermore, Matei Socor, in his communist-inspired campaign for purge of the higher-education system, made a detailed though indiscriminate description of the faults plaguing the academic community at the time: "all those who participated in Romanian-German associations, in cultural exchanges and at friendship concerts/events, in creating a *false* atmosphere of alliance and of 'brotherhood in arms' should be held responsible...Can they

²¹ George C. Guins, "The Academy of Sciences of the USSR", *Russian Review*, vol. 12, No. 4 (Oct., 1953), pp. 270-271.

²² Maria Someșan, Mircea Iosifescu "Modificarea structurii Universității în anii consolidării sistemului communist", pp. 469 in Romulus Rusan (ed.), *Analele Sighet 6, Anul 1948 – Instituționalizarea Comunismului* (București: Fundația Academia Civică, 1998), pp. 445-480.

anymore hide behind the pretext of mere cultural activity?...They bear equal, if not bigger, responsibility as those who killed in prisons.” V. Condrea was adding a nail to the coffin when listing in an article what he labeled as “the Iron Guardist rectors and deans still active within the Romanian university system”.²³

The press campaign was targeting both the University and the Academy, calling for the purification of research-education structures from has-beens (i.e., “collaborationists”, “counterrevolutionaries”, and representatives of the *ancien régime* on the “cultural front”). Ultimately, the extensive transformation of the scientific field was justified by means of meaning substitution. Labels such as ‘enemy of the people’ became synonymous with ‘collaborators with the enemy’, ‘war criminal’, ‘anti-democratic element’, or ‘anti-Soviet attitude’. Authors such as Someșan and Iosifescu emphasize the *ambiguity of categories* and *the transfer of meaning* contained in the post-1944 anti-collaborationism laws. If the first decree mentioned the “purification of public administration” (no. 1486, 1944) making reference to those who were active in the fascist-type organizations in the country, and its second version (law no. 594, 1944), promoted by the minister of justice, L. Pătrășcanu, incriminated “those who paved the way for the fascist dictatorship”, the last version (law no. 217/1945) extended the array of indictment to “all those who adopted an antidemocratic attitude.”²⁴ The collaboration of some academicians and professors with the royal dictatorship, with the Antonescu regime, with the German representatives, or with the Iron Guard was emphasized by the Sovietophile press and in the politics of the Democratic Parties Bloc (later the National Democratic Front) in counter-

²³ Matei Socor and V. Condrea in *Romania Liberă*, September 10th and 12th 1944, *Ibidem*, pp. 451-452. For a thorough analysis of the epoch’s *kulturkampf* see Ana Selejan *Trădarea intelectualilor. Reeducare și prigoană* (București: Cartea Românească, 2005).

²⁴ In Someșan and Iosifescu, *Ibidem*, pp. 454.

distinction with the campaigns for post-war democracy, antifascism, and reform of the Romanian nation-state.²⁵

At the same time, similarly to other countries in Eastern Europe, until it officially conquered power (December 30, 1947), in Romania, the communist party reformulated the idea of national unity, adjusting it so that the party would be situated at the forefront of reform and national renewal. According to Ana Pauker,

While it remains the party of the proletariat, our party, because it has the duty to mobilize not only the proletariat but also its closest allies – the peasantry, must bring nearer to them *all the forces that are interested in fighting against fascism*. It must pull together and lead these forces so that they, despite their various origins, encompassing intellectuals and even some industrialists, would not feel in any way uncomfortable. Such forces' prejudice can be understood for they are led by someone alien to them, whom they are not used to appreciate to its full value, the party of the workers, and toward which they have all sorts of suspicions, hurt sensibilities, and reactions harmful to our common cause. The new situation is alleviated for us by the fact that several strata in Romania realize today that *we cannot continue with things as they have been done up to now (așa cum au mers lucrurile până acum nu mai pot merge)*. [my emphasis]²⁶

In Romania, just like in Hungary, Poland, or Czechoslovakia, national unity will be limited to the so-called “patriotic” political and social forces, that is, the political left, which between 1944 and 1948, increasingly shrunk to the numbers of those willing to integrate into and work with the new communist regime. Martin Mevius excellently stressed that, this vision of ‘national unity’ expressed “an exclusionary national community that comprised only the social base” of the respective communist parties: “the workers, peasants, and progressive intelligentsia. They were promised the deciding vote in the People’s Democracy, while its social enemies were to be

²⁵ A similar argument is developed by Bradley Abrams for the case of Czechoslovakia and in Norman Naimark’s edited volume: Abrams, *“The Struggle for...”* and Norman Naimark and Leonid Gibianskii (eds.), *The Establishment of Communist Regimes in Eastern Europe, 1944-1949* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1997). For a rather brief but still informative analysis of the involvement of historians and academicians in the politics of culture during the royal dictatorship and during Antonescu regime (also in the context of the Second World War) see Florin Müller, *Metamorfoze ale politicului românesc 1938-1944* (București: Editura Universității București, 2005) and Mioara Anton, *Propaganda și război 1941-1944* (București: Tritonic, 2007).

²⁶ „Expunerea lui Ana Pauker la ședința cu responsabili cu propaganda – 28 I 1945”, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, 2/1945, f. 5.

excluded.”²⁷ Or, to return to Ana Pauker, “we cannot build a socialist society, we cannot lay its foundations until fascism will be plucked from its roots in the country.”²⁸ The revolutionary breakthrough in Romania, as across the Eastern Europe, could only be achieved at the expense of those deemed as undemocratic. This ultimately led to an indiscriminate swelling of the ranks of the dreaded „fascists.”

This procedure of merging political faults, academic integrity and counter-proposals for reform (from non-communist areas of the public space) makes it, even nowadays, very difficult to analyze the profile of the 1940s Romanian cultural-scientific landscape. The lack of discrimination, at the time, when judging various personalities was counterbalanced, after 1989, by a similar ascendance of qualification in their all-out rehabilitation. The irony is that many of these individuals were already pretty much rehabilitated by the communist regime itself, by the end of 1970s. A commonsensical observation would be that people such as Nichifor Crainic, Constantin C. Giurescu, Gheorghe Brătianu, P.P. Panaitescu, V. Marcu, Scarlat Lambrino, Florian Ștefănescu-Goangă, Teofil Sauciuc-Săveanu, etc. would have been at least ‘lustrated’ (to use a contemporary term) if not altogether sentenced for collaborationism or extreme-right beliefs/actions (some of them). Of course, they would not die in jail, as it often happened, but a purge of Romanian educational system would most likely have taken place in post-war Romania, regardless of the political regime. Considering the political dynamics of higher-education in Romania from mid-1920s onwards, one cannot but wonder if the drama of the Romanian Academy and universities at the end of the forties was not also partially self-inflicted.

²⁷ Martin Mevius, *Agents of Moscow: The Hungarian Communist Party and the Origins of Socialist Patriotism, 1941-1953* (Oxford: Clarendon, 2004), p. 171.

²⁸ „Expunerea lui Ana Pauker..”, f. 7.

An additional problem was the lack of non-communist initiatives of reform of higher-education and of its institutions. Moreover, many of its members showed a glaring lack of sense for the times and for the necessity of retreat from previous, now compromised, political positions. Grigore T. Popa, the dean of the Medicine Department of the Bucharest University, brought forth, in a meeting of the Senate (October 1946), a petition in which he attempted to pinpoint the fallacies of the no. 658 Law that annulled the autonomy of the institution. His speech, however, contained a statement telling for the lack of serious reassessment of pre-1945 past: “our universities do not deserve the veto given by the no. 658 Law. From the point of view of a big-picture analysis, the Romanian universities, in their arguably short existence and under circumstances of scarcity of support, did manage to position themselves honourably among the other universities of the world.”²⁹ A similarly candid position was taken by sociologist Dimitrie Gusti, who upon his return from a trip abroad (United States, France and Palestine), filed a report, *Vers une conception réaliste et scientifique de la paix*, in which he argues that during his voyage he noticed a widespread preoccupation to extend at a world-stage the “science of the nation”. Accordingly, he was calling for the creation of an international institute focused on “the knowledge of the nation”.³⁰ This initiative reflected a narrative developed during the 1940s that “focused on ‘what the given nation had given to the world’.” Gusti’s and, as we shall see later, geographer Simion Mehedinți’s projects of an „ethno-pedagogy” did bear the imprint of radical primordialism of the wartime period. They also, as one author remarked, presupposed a folk

²⁹ Maria Someșan and Mircea Iosifescu, *Ibidem*, pp. 461-464.

³⁰ Al. Zub, *Orizont Închis. Istoriografia română sub dictatură* (Iași: Institutul European, 2000), pp. 39. Zub lists other three drafts of reform of the Academy (of sectors or of the entire institution) authored by Anibal Teodorescu, Ion I. Nistor and Radu Rosetti, but only the latter seems to attempt to adjust to the new political realities of the times. Zub however does not make any mention of retroactive evaluation in these documents.

symbolism that will be quickly recuperated by the communist regime as a sign of popular culture versus decadent bourgeois, high-culture.³¹

Both examples indicate the lack of a counter-reform, of ‘politically correct’ proposals coming from the non-communist influenced section of the Romanian academia. The two academicians, Popa and Gusti, show incapacity to grasp the fact that the Academy and the University were not, at least initially, attacked on basis of the value of the scholarship produced, but from political positions. And for Popa, dean of a department which was one of the centers of the Iron Guard movement at the level of the student body, to simply ignore this fact is indeed puzzling. Popa himself was black-listed by the Iron Guard in 1940. In 1944, he was among the signatories of the 1944 protest memorandum by a group of intellectuals requesting the end of Romania’s involvement in the war and the denunciation of its alliance with Nazi Germany. The pro-communist social-democrat Minister of Public Education, Ștefan Voitec, personally nominated Popa for his dean position. Popa, however, refused to become a fellow traveler, as he resigned from *ALRUS*³² and severely criticized the communist government.³³

Gusti’s proposal, on the other hand, came dangerously close to the ides promoted in the works of some historians during the war’s (counter) propaganda about the Romanians in Transylvania, Bassarabia, Bucovina, or Transnistria³⁴. Such activities, by 1946, were already

³¹ Balázs Trencsényi, “‘Imposed Authenticity’: Approaching Eastern European National Characterologies in the Inter-war Period”, *Central Europe*, Vol. 8, No. 1, May, 2010, pp. 37-38.

³² The Romanian Association for Strengthening the Relationship with the USSR. For an introductory account about this organization see Adrian Cioroianu, *Pe umerii lui Marx. O introducere în istoria comunismului românesc* (București: Curtea Veche Publishing, 2005), pp. 106-148.

³³ See *Subteranele memoriei. Pagini din rezistența culturii 1944-1954* (București: Editura Universal Dalsi, 2005), pp. 369-371.

³⁴ For example, Mihai Antonescu created in 1942 the Peace Bureau, an institutional structure within the Ministry of National Propaganda that had a *historical section*. Some of the famed names of the historical profession worked in or with the Peace Bureau or the MNP. See Mioara Anton, *Ibidem*, pp. 103-110 and Petre Out and Aurel Pentelescu, *Gheorghe I. Brătianu. Istorie și politică* (București: Grupul Editorial Corint, 2003).

causes for indictment.³⁵ Another proposal of reform came from geographer S. Mehedinți in his lecture *The Geographic Method in Natural and Social Sciences*, in which he argued in favour of “a national pedagogy, for which purpose the Academy was about to be transformed into an ethnopedagogical institution, a Senate of the Romanian intelligentsia.”³⁶ Considering that one of the gravest of accusations was “great-nation chauvinism”, advocating ethnocentrism was hardly a compromise solution. The Academy’s group of ‘had-beens’ (*foști*) antinomically positioned themselves in relation with both the idea of reform and the new political power. They, therefore, remained vulnerable to and inadvertently encouraged the undifferentiated political accusations that later turned into sentences in court and ultimately led to the tragic end of many of these personalities of the Romanian cultural-academic space. For example, in Czechoslovakia, chief party ideologue, Vaclav Kopecky, declared in 1946 that “our new culture, the culture of the new Czechoslovakia, should be national in form, and in content democratic, from the people, and progressive.”³⁷ In the end the communist parties in the immediate postwar aftermath, by taking over key-principles such as “democracy”, “antifascism”, “progresiveness”, “reform” etc., basically forced their challengers or enemies to *prove* to the public opinion and state authorities (on their way to being Sovietized) that they too followed similar ideas.

C. The Stages of Transformation and Cultural Revolution

³⁵ This point of view gains additional weight if one reads Gusti’s 1947 initiative in connection with the May 1941 project of Academy reform promoted by him along with Mihai Ciucă, PP Negulescu, Liviu Rebreanu, Radu R Rosetti. They wished to adjust the institution to the post-1940 circumstances (Vienna diktat and the non-aggression pact) along the lines of “an intensified promotion of national culture in order to strengthen the spiritual frontiers of the nation, as compensation for the provisional mutilation of the national state.” See Cristina Păiușan, “Epurările din Academia Română”, pp. 538-544 in Rusan (ed.), *Analele Sighet 6*, pp. 539-540 and Dan Berindei, *Ibidem*, pp. 214-215.

³⁶ Al. Zub, *Ibidem*, pp. 52.

³⁷ Abrams, *The Struggle*, p. 94.

The socialist reform of the Academy was performed in several stages. The ultimate transformation of 1948 is just the tip of the iceberg. It was rather the result of the policy adopted against the professorship of the Universities and against those academicians who also held positions in various political parties or had undergone governmental activity before August 1944. Historians, jurists and literati were most affected because they formed a distinct occupational category with heavy pre-war and war political involvement. Constantin Iordachi argued that one of the specific problems of the historical field in the Central and Eastern Europe was the association between being a historian and ‘doing’ politics.³⁸ This category of “historian-politician” will play an important role in the attitude of the communist power toward those historians members of the Academy (and toward their respective university departments). And it also explains a great deal of the rehabilitation process during the “national turn” from late 1950s onwards.

The first step toward the creation of a communist controlled Academy was law no. 217 (1945). It was aimed at purging public administration of those employees “who, by their own will, had participated in any way to promote a public opinion favorable to fascist or Hitlerist purposes”, those “who pursued activities, of any form, focused on establishing or strengthening dictatorship”, or “who, through the manner of fulfilling their duties or by means of publicity and propaganda have taken an antidemocratic attitude.”³⁹ This law affected people such as Eugen Chirnoagă, Radu Meitani, P.P. Panaitescu, Radu Paul, Victor Jinga, Iuliu Hațieganu, O. Ghimbu.

³⁸ In Constantin Iordachi, "Entangled Histories: Re-writing the History of Central and Southeastern Europe from a Relational Perspective" *European Studies/Etudes Européennes/Europaichen Studien* 4 (29 April 2004), the Council of Europe; and *Enlargement Research Bulletin* (June 2004). Republished in Regio, Yearbook 2004, pp. 113-147.

³⁹ Maria Someșan, *Universitate și Politică în deceniile 4-6 ale secolului XX – episoade și documente* (București: Editura Universității din București, 2004), pp.268-270 and Someșan and Iosifescu, *Ibidem*.

The Commission in-charge with the purge of the education system was made up of S. Stoilov, Al Rosetti si P.P. Stănescu, future pillars of respectability for the new Academy.

The second stage was the so-called “the rationalization of higher education”. This phase was managed by another commission made up of Traian Săvulescu, Miron Nicolescu, C. Tegădeanu, C. Daicoviciu and P Constantinescu-Iași (as president of the Professors’ Trade Union). Upon this commission’s recommendation, Ștefan Voitec issued on October 2, 1947 a decree with retroactive applicability that declared retired over 80 professors, who were implicitly being taken out of the system. A third practice was that of simply disbanding departments or University positions. Another decision stated that by September 1st over 300 positions were eliminated from the nomenclature of the university structures in Romania.⁴⁰ In some special cases, however, the person holding the professorship was yet again signalled out (*se comprimă persoana*): for example, historian Ghe Brătianu, philosopher Dragoș Protopopescu, or Gr. T. Popa. Historian Maria Someșan stated that the consequence of these legal decisions within the higher-education system was the decimation of the ‘old guard’. Of the pre-1945 academia only 3.5 percent were still teaching philosophy, only 23 percent philology, 35 percent law, and only approximately 16 percent history. All in all, by 1948 the position of many of the Academy’s members was seriously weakened, if not gravely endangered, both politically and professionally. Some of them were already in home arrest or in detention camps, while others were soon to join them in the Romanian Gulag system.

The first and most obvious outcome of the above described campaign was, according to the Academy’s president, Andrei Rădulescu, that “in accordance with the principle adopted by the Academy, those members who had been already previously sentenced cannot anymore be

⁴⁰ Also see Alexandru Zub, “Despre anul istoriografic 1948 în România: impactul stalinist”, pp. 553-564 in Romulus Rusan ed, *Ibidem* and Al Zub, *Ibidem...*, p. 17-58.

part of our institution”. Therefore, at the May-June 1948 meeting only 40 full and 40 standing members were present to analyze the 11-point draft program presented, in the name of the Scientific Section, by Traian Săvulescu (at the time, already a minister in the new communist government). This document proposed the creation of an Academy representative of the new “popular democracy”. His main opponents, as mentioned previously, were part of the History and Literature sections: Dimitrie Gusti, Al. Lapedatu, Ion Petrovici, C. Rădulescu-Motru, Ion Nistor, etc. The main argument of the Scientific Section was that the Academy needed to go through a revolutionary transformation in order to gain the ability of functioning according to the ethos of the present. C. Parhon also specified that in case of a veto of the draft, the members who brought it forward will resign and create a new, ‘truly democratic’ Academy. It never got to this point, for despite opposition and heartening speeches, such as that of G. T. Popa, the votes went toward the direction of reform. Accordingly, on June 9, 1948, the old Academy was disbanded and a new statute was promulgated by the president of the Council of Ministers, P. Groza, by the Minister of Justice, Avram Bunaciu, C. Parhon and Emil Popa. The inaugural meeting of the Academy of the Popular Republic of Romania took place on October 18, 1948. It was presided by C. Parhon in the presence of Gheorghiu-Dej and P. Groza, among others. At this first public event of the new Academy, around 100 former members were not present, not being nominated anymore on the membership list. Many of them were already in jail or unemployed and socially marginalized by communist regime.

Traian Săvulescu’s opening addresses during the inaugural session offered a clear definition of the new institution’s role. He stated that

the Academy will no more be just a forum of prestige confirmation, a club for people distanced from the realities of social life. It will regain its place at the forefront of the mass of toilers and thus it will elevate the country’s working people, for it is to become a site of resilient and permanent activity. In contrast to prior conceptions that made it an amorphous scientific body, our

Academy will foster a planned science, conforming to the overall developmental targets for the country's economic and the people's cultural progress.⁴¹

Furthermore, in a lecture on history and literature (November 1948), P. Constantinescu-Iași was already setting the RPR Academy's goals in these two fields: "the entire cultural patrimony of our past and the Romanian historical research have to be reconsidered altogether along the lines of the most advanced system of theoretical thought [Marxism-Leninism]."⁴² The immediate consequence of such aim was the publication of the *Index of the banned books* (May 1, 1948), a 522-page long volume, listing over 8,000 titles.

These speeches expressed the two axes upon which higher education was and will be transformed. First, the Academy had to fall into line with the new conception about the practicality of science. Second, the institution was to pursue its activity within a particular ideological system of reference. Its new profile and functions are best described by physicist Vasilescu-Karpen's statement that "the Academy's autonomy will exist in accordance to the norms of 'popular democracy'."⁴³ Subsequently, the Academy's reform, along with that of the entire institutional structure of the Romanian higher education, became part and parcel of the cultural revolution instrumentalized by the communist regime. In 1948, M. Roller argued that despite early successes, decision-makers would nevertheless have to increase their class vigilance.⁴⁴ Furthermore, C. Parhon announced the creation of a "third front" in the battle for "building the groundwork of socialism": "last year's decision of the Academy's Presidium prescribing the proper directions for scientific activity in our country were aimed at up-rooting

⁴¹ Traian Săvulescu, "Știința, literatura, arta și slujitorii ei în RPR", *Analele Academiei Republicii Populare Române*, 1948-1949, pp. 102-124.

⁴² P. Constantinescu-Iași, "Probleme de istorie și literatură", *Analele Academiei Republicii Populare Române*, 1948-1949, pp.148.

⁴³ Petru Popescu-Gogan, Claudia Ilie-Voiculescu, "Desființarea Academiei Române și înființarea Academiei R.P. Române", pp. 487-505 in Romulus Rusan ed., *Ibidem*.

⁴⁴ Mihail Roller, *Pe drumul revoluției noastre culturale*, (București: Editura Știința, 1949), p. 18.

cosmopolitanism, objectivism, remnants of bourgeois ideology, all the weeds and debris that prevent the blossoming of some researchers' the scientific work.”⁴⁵

If before 1948, the communist party tried to counter the image of “agents of Moscow” (Mevius) with that a national, popular force, once it gained unchallenged power, it did not shy away any longer from declaring the ideological imperative of transforming the domestic social order. At the onset of the Cold War, any national deviation became the greatest political aberration. The principle enunciated by Ana Pauker in 1945 according to which “without the friendship with the Soviet Union one cannot live as s/he cannot live without air” now was transformed into the an unwavering criterion of integration or excision within the structures of the party-state. Belonging depended on emulation of the Soviet model. To paraphrase the Hungarian Minister of National Defense, Mihaly Farcas, “he, comrades, who wavers a millimetre, a tenth of a millimetre from the Soviet Union, or Comrade Stalin, ceases to be a communist.”⁴⁶ Unsurprisingly, 1948 was the year when Lucrețiu Pătrășcanu, „the Romanian Rajk”, fell from power and was arrested.

The new Statute of the Academy clearly advocated for the creation of a ‘progressive’ knowledge elite. The institution was meant to

identify and promote all individuals showing cultural and scientific worthiness, who also have a moral behavior and a politically democratic mindset. It will insure that all necessary conditions will be met so that their flourishing activity in their fields of study would also be used for the benefit of the people. Thus, for this purpose, the Academy will coordinate the activity of all institutes and centers of research through the country.⁴⁷

There was, therefore, an ambivalent character to the organization and aims of the new governing body of the Romanianplanned science. On the one hand, its birth-pangs brought about a set of

⁴⁵ Parhon’s introductory article to the first edition of *Studies and Research on Endocrinology* journal, trim. 1 No.1, June 1950

⁴⁶ Mevius, *Agents of Moscow*, p. 245.

⁴⁷ Dorina Rusu, *Istoria Academiei în date (1866-1996)* (București: Editura Academiei, 1997), p. 323.

negative practices: the old-guard was purged and the traditional academic ethos was rejected by the new leadership. This exclusionary aspect was, at the time, riding the wave of overall communization of the Romanian society and of its institutions. On the other hand, though, as the statute shows, the new rules and goals had a *positive potential* in a context of the acknowledgement of the ideological framework set up by the party-state.

The 1948 to 1954 period in the history of the Academy and of the historical field can be easily characterized as one of “revolutionary breakthrough” (Kenneth Jowitt) brought about by “High Stalinism”. However, their evolution starting with 1955 already shows signs of inclusionary tendencies. One can notice an incipient process of negotiation and bargaining between the academia and the political authorities. Following, Al. Zub argument, I believe that the communist impact upon the Romanian writing of history was a permanent struggle for equilibrium between *persecutio* and *creatio*. In his own words, *continuity is no less interesting than the breach* [my emphasis].⁴⁸ Such bickering was possible because of the negative-positive/exclusion-inclusion simultaneities that, as Michael David-Fox argued, were intrinsic to the “the Bolshevik cultural project.”⁴⁹ The party destroyed the structures that characterized the former state organization, but it also brought about environments of ambiguity because it was impossible to expect the creation of an entire state or society anew. This grey zone allowed for compromise and synthesis. Under circumstances of change in party line, this brought about a nascent reorientation toward the past, toward tradition and its representatives - a counterpart or compensation for continuous repression.

⁴⁸ Alexndru Zub, “Romania’s Sovitization: historiographical implication”, Al. Zub and Flavius Solomon eds., *Sovietization in Romania and Czechoslovakia – History, Analogies, Consequences* (Iasi: Polirom, 2003), pp. 11-17.

⁴⁹ Michael David-Fox, “What is Cultural Revolution?”, *Russian Review*, vol.58, no.2 (Apr., 1999), pp.181-201. His article was an evaluation of the literature on the ‘cultural revolution’ after Sheila Fitzpatrick’s. It provoked a brief exchange with Fitzpatrick: Sheila Fitzpatrick, “Cultural Revolution Revisited”, *Russian Review*, vol. 58, no. 2 (April 1999), pp. 202-209 and Michael David-Fox, “Mentalité or Cultural System”, in *Russian Review*, vol.58, n.2 (Apr., 1999), pp. 210-211.

The Party did create alternative structures, such as the “Ștefan Gheorghiu” University (1947), the “A.A. Jdanov” Higher School of Social Studies (1948), the Party History Institute (1951), or the system of vocational education (fast-track education of the working-class, an initiative drawing inspiration from the Soviet *rabfak* model). This however, by 1955, just led to a *division of labor* within the historical field. The Academy will become the highest forum expressive of such dynamics within the regime’s knowledge elite. It will become an environment within which a re-enchantment with the past will be performed, in parallel and even antedating the party-line ideological shifts.

The strategy used by communist parties across Eastern Europe in order to reach power was one that continued to a large extent the popular front line initially developed by the Comintern during mid 1930s and perfected in the Second World War after 1941. It contained a fundamental ambivalence, for it argued both for national liberation and democracy and the defense of the Soviet Union. As Stalin once said communist parties “must become national communist parties under various names—Workers’ Party, Marxist Party, and so on. The name is not important. What is important, is that they take root among their own people and concentrate on their own specific tasks.”⁵⁰ This idea was rooted in the Bolshevik policy of *korenizatsiia*, according to which, within the USSR’s republics, autonomous territories, and among recognized nationalities, the Soviet power had to become native (*rodnaia*), intimate (*blizkaia*), popular (*narodnaia*), and comprehensible (*poniatnaia*). Thus, “the non-Russian masses would see that Soviet power and her organs as the affair of their own efforts, the embodiment of their desires.” (Lenin)⁵¹ This idea of indigenizing communism had therefore existed since the inception of the communist regime in Eastern Europe. But, as the Cold War began and considering Stalin’s

⁵⁰ *Apud* Mevius, *Agents of Moscow*, p. 37.

⁵¹ Martin, *Affirmative Action*, p. 13.

escalating autocracy, domestically and internationally, early discussions about a “national road to communism” in Eastern Europe (especially in Czechoslovakia and Poland, but also in Hungary)⁵² ceased.

At the same time, as Andrzej Paczkowski underscored, “many features that did not fit the Soviet model of the totalitarian state remained in effect for a certain period of time” in each of the countries of the newly created socialist camp. They reflected the local particularities of the timeframe from 1944 to 1948 that was a

specific transitional stage, which reduced the external and internal costs of the great transformation that was the dream of the local communists and their counterparts in Moscow. Once the Cold War was severely restricting the influence of the Western powers, and the internal enemy...had been totally destroyed, there was nothing to prevent the completion, in all spheres of public life, of the project that had been started.⁵³

Either way we wish to read the transitional phase of 1944-1948 or various declarations of communist leaders, both in Romania and in other countries undergoing Sovietization, according to which their parties were the continuers and inheritors of the best and most national strivings and yearnings of their respective peoples, the reality remains that by Stalin’s death, the bottom line remains that all these entities had failed to establish a national policy and remained “the agents of Moscow” (with the exception of Yugoslavia). Nikita Khrushchev’s Secret Speech and his de-Stalinization found these regimes mired in the totalitarian dead end of socialist patriotism: “the Sovietization of national symbols did not sell Socialism but was regarded instead by many as an insult.”⁵⁴ The rise of Imre Nagy or Wladislaw Gomulka along with Gheorghiu-Dej’s increasingly self-centred regime brought back a revival of the talk of a national road to socialism.

⁵² See Abrams, *The Struggle*, pp. 178-179 and pp. 182-185, Mevius, *Agents of Moscow*, pp. 170-171,

⁵³ Andrzej Paczkowski, *The Spring Will Be Ours: Poland and the Poles from Occupation to Freedom* (University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003), p. 219.

⁵⁴ I am paraphrasing Martin Mevius. See Mevius, *Agents of Moscow*, p. 267.

D. The Seeds of Change: The Academy and the Historical Front

In 1953, just before Stalin's death Gheorghiu-Dej had emerged as the unchallenged leader of the Romanian Workers' Party after the purge of the Pauker-Luca-Georgescu faction. The purge of "the right-wing deviation" was only the tip of the iceberg of waves of purges at the beginning of the 1950s. With the changes taking place at the Moscow Center, both the Romanian regime and its scientific front were finally settling down. The RWP had finished its first phase of consolidation, as the "prison nucleus" "secured the undivided commitment of its cadres by reducing the reference groups for those cadres to one – the Party as represented by its leadership". Simultaneously though, the RWP engaged in a gradual "expansion of the internal boundaries of the political system itself."⁵⁵ This process was most apparent in the process of the consecration of a national elite in the realm of culture and science. The socialist offensive of the late forties and early fifties had cleared the field for those intellectuals and scientists who adhered to the the RWP's project of radical transformation. Moreover, Stalin's death generated a lull in the regime's purge politics. All in all, by 1955, the system of planned science entered a stage of professionalization and institutionalization reflective of the consolidated polity appeared after the first push for (self-)Sovietization in communist Romania

The year 1955 was highly significant for the historical field, and in perspective, for the "national turn". First of all, because of the process of change it brought about within the Academy's membership ranks. In 1948, the elections of new members took place. Among those honored with a place within the institutional pinnacle of the new socialist organization of science and education were, as full members: P. Constantinescu-Iași, Iorgu Iordan, C. Balmuș; Mihail Ralea, Mihail Roller, and Camil Petrescu. The following people were also elected as associate

⁵⁵ Jowitt, *The New World Disorder*, pp. 89-92.

members: Emil Condurachi, Constantin Daicoviciu, Andrei Oțetea, David Prodan, Geo Bogza, and Dumitru Panaitescu-Perpessicius (they will be joined by Gheorghe Ștefan). The individuals from the two lists were elected in the newly created Section for history, philosophy, economy and law. Most of them are historians, some of them literati – all of them playing crucial roles in the regime’s politics of culture and in its attitude to the writing of history in Romania.

The 1948 full members of this section of the Academy will be ‘the unchallenged barons of culture’ roughly until 1955. The elections of 1955 will prove as a moment of limited upswing in personnel dynamics. Emil Condurachi, C. Daicoviciu, Andrei Oțetea, David Prodan will become full members (joined by Ion Nestor and Virgil Vătășianu as standing members) along with Geo Bogza, and Dumitru Panaitescu-Perpessicius, Tudor Arghezi, Cezar Petrescu, Zaharia Stancu, Tudor Vianu, etc. In all fairness, 1955 was also the year when high ranked party representatives became members of the Academy: Alexandru Bârlădeanu, Ion Gheorghe-Maurer, or Lothar Rădăceanu. What is significant about many of the above-mentioned individuals is the fact that most of them were not ideologues or red specialists. They were rather fellow travelers or individuals who adjusted to the epistemic priorities and systemic dynamics of the communist regime. Many of the new full or standing members, who were not historians, had represented before 1945 the left-wing sector of the Romanian cultural realm. Before 1955, some of them had been affected by campaigns against “rotten cosmopolitanism” or “bourgeoise objectivism”.⁵⁶ But as the internal boundaries of the political system expanded, they now qualified as “progressive”

⁵⁶ The most famous speech that employed these tools of ideological correction of cultural and scientific life in the early years of Romanian communism belongs to the party’s chief ideologue Leonte Răutu and it is entitled “Împotriva cosmopolitismului și obiectivismului burghez în științele sociale” in Vladimir Tismaneanu și Cristian Vasile, *Perfectul Acrobat. Leonte Răutu, măștile răului* (București: Humanitas, 2008).

or “the people’s intelligentsia”⁵⁷ – a pioneering group of what later will become the national elite of Romanian culture and science under communism. Last but not least, their rehabilitation and/or integration came at the price of manifest compromises and ecomia to the party and to the new social order.⁵⁸

The historians who were included in this wave of promotions had black spots in their biographies. Ion Nestor was founding member of the Romanian-German Association (1942), probably the translator of *Mein Kampf* in Romanian, and was a subaltern of C.C. Giurescu at the Ministry of Propaganda during the war.⁵⁹ David Prodan, was vulnerable to accusations of factionalism (which indeed happen in 1953, when he was accused of “right-wing deviation”)⁶⁰. Daicoviciu was dean at the Bucharest University during the Antonescu regime and one of the closest pupils of Ghe. Brătianu. Vătășianu was the former Secretary of the Romanian School of Roma. Condurachi used to be a prominent member of the same institution and also spent igitificant time at the correspondent school in France. All of these historians experienced early in their careers plenty of exposure to Western scholarship and historical schools (Leipzig, Rome, Munich, Berlin, Paris, etc.). They hardly seemed to be the model of anti-cosmopolitanism, of Soviet educated or favorable professors, or of the ‘builders of socialism’ for that matter. They will form, initially under the leadership of Andrei Oțetea, the personnel and institutional bedrock favorable for a ‘national turn’ in the historical field in parallel and in connection with the

⁵⁷ Lilly, *Power and Persuasion*, p. 80. These intellectuals were the first generation that benefited from the regime’s politics of persuasion, for the latter was, according to Lilly, “even more important to the social and cultural transformation required by the party’s long-term vision for the future.” (p. 1)

⁵⁸ For an updated Romanian contribution on the communist regime’s politics of culture between 1948 and 1953, based on newly available archives, see Cristian Vasile *Literatura și artele în România comunistă 1948-1953* (București: Humanitas, 2010).

⁵⁹ Ioan Opriș, *Istoricii și Securitatea*, vol. I (București: Editura Enciclopedică, 2004), pp. 21-37.

⁶⁰ David Prodan, *Memorii* (București: Editura Enciclopedică, 1993), pp. 66-70.

political transformation taking place at the party level.⁶¹ When analyzing these personnel changes one has to also keep in mind that starting with 1950, the position of president of the R.P.R. Academy was inserted into the nomenclature of the Centrala Committee of the R.W.P. The person holding this position was nominated by the party and validated by the politburo. As one author showed, “the nominations of new members of the Academy were approved at the highest levels of the party. The Academy’s full and standing members entered the nomenclature of the C.C. of the R.W.P. based upon the nominations made by the C.C.’s Propaganda and Agitation Section, which put these names forward to the Secretariat.”⁶² Therefore, it can be argued that the promotion of a different type of academicians was indeed signaling a change in the party line on the scientific (i.e. historical) front.

One author characterizes the triumvirate of Oțetea, Daicoviciu, and Condurachi in the following manner: “they represent some of the most devoted historians [to the cause of national historiography]. They succeeded in obtaining decision-making positions within the academia and in Romanian society. In holding the highest academic, university and political ranks, they controlled and guided for decades the university and academic post-war milieu. Also using their long-term connections with political leaders – such as Petru Groza, Constantinescu-Iași, Tudor Bugnariu, Miron Constantinescu, and even Gheorghiu-Dej – they brought about benefices for the historical profession.”⁶³ Another excellent indication of the new times to come was an informative note to the secret police, made on October 1956, about historian M. Berza. It reads:

⁶¹ For complete biographical details of the members of this first weave of what I will later brand as *smenovekhovtsy* historians see: Ștefan Ștefănescu *et al.*, *Enciclopedia Istoriografiei Românești* (București: Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1978), Florin Müller, *Politică și istoriografie în România 1948-1964* (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Neremia Napocae, 2003), Florica Dobre (coord.), *Membrii CC ai PCR* (București: Editura Enciclopedică, 2004), Ioan Opreș, *Ibidem* and volume II (București: Editura Enciclopedică, 2007), Florin Constantiniu *De la Răutu și Roller la Mușat și Ardeleanu* (București: Editura Enciclopedică, 2007).

⁶² Nicoleta Ionescu Gură, *Stalinizarea României. Republica Populară Română: 1948-1950. Transformări instituționale* (București: Editura ALL, 2005), pp. 454-464.

⁶³ Ioan Opreș, *Ibidem*, pp. 16.

“in Romania there is no place for *politicians of science* anymore, but only for true eminence. This is what he [Berza] claims [the informant comments] to have been personally told by the minister Murgulescu, when he was handed-over the decree of re-entitlement as full-time professor.”⁶⁴

The two most representative figures for the category of “politicians of science” were Mihail Roller and Constantinescu-Iași. The first fits into the category of *praktiki*, personifying the cultural-scientific orthodoxy in the historical field, thus becoming a factor of reference in judging the ideological deviation of those who fell under their jurisdiction (institutional or symbolic).⁶⁵ The second was more of a *historian-censor*⁶⁶, who was involved in the purge commissions and in the drafting of the *Index of Banned Books*. Constantinescu-Iași did attempt three times⁶⁷ to take a public position in reference with political conformity of professional norms, but he never produced a textbook like Roller. The latter set the standard of historical writing from 1947 until 1955. He led the group of authors who wrote the high school textbook *Istoria R.P.R.*, which created a new historiographical paradigm (*rollerism*⁶⁸). Its preface stated that “this history is structurally different from all the previous histories because of the scientific notion and method

⁶⁴Ioan Opreș, *Ibidem*, pp. 555.

⁶⁵ In Sheila Fitzpatrick, “Culture and Politics under Stalin: A Reappraisal”, *Slavic Review*, vol.35, no.2 (Jun., 1976), pp. 213-231.

⁶⁶ One possible comparative case that could be relevant for a better understanding of the *historian-censor* category is that of Anna Pankratova. She was one of the pace setters for Soviet historiography under Stalin (see her contribution at the *Twenty-five Years of Historical Scholarship in the USSR*), but she also adopted recurrently maverick attitudes and approaches within the Soviet historical field under Stalin and in the years following his death. see: Shteppa, *Russian Historians*, Markwick, *Rewriting History*; Reginald E. Zelnik ed., *Perils of Pankratova: Some Stories from the Annals of Soviet Historiography* (Seattle: Published by the Herbert J. Ellison Center for Russian, Eastern European, and Central Asian Studies, University of Washington, 2005).

⁶⁷The first is the already mentioned 1948 Academy address, the second is the 1955 *Realizările istoriografiei române între anii 1945-1955*, and the third is “Valențele educative ale istoriei”, *Studii și articole de istorie*, 17 (1972).

⁶⁸ For more details in English about *rollerism* see Dennis Deletant, “Rewriting the Past: Trends in Contemporary Romanian Historiography”, in *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, (Jan. 1991), vol. 14, no. 1, p. 64-85, Keith Hitchins, “Historiography of the Countries of Eastern Europe: Romania” (1992), *American Historical Review*, vol. 97, pp. 1064-83; Șerban Papacostea, “Captive Clio: Romanian Historiography under Communist Rule”, *European History Quarterly* (1996), vol 26, no. 2, pp. 181-208, Iordachi, *Ibidem*, Vladimir Tismaneanu, *Stalinism for All*.

upon which it relies” - dialectical and historical materialism. In other words, “the textbook converted into the acknowledged culture the cultural arbitrariness presupposed by the very existence of the ‘people’s democracy’ regime.”⁶⁹ Roller was deputy-chief of the Propaganda Section of the Romanian Workers Party and vice-president of the R.P.R. Academy (1949-1954). In 1955, he was demoted to the position of vice-president of the Institute of Party History. M. Roller’s activity as a party historian is severely criticized during the 9-13th, June 1958 plenary session of the PMR. Roller gradually loses influence. He did not survive both politically and physically to the change in party-line.⁷⁰

Constantinescu-Iași, however, was more of a symbolic figure of the party. During the inter-war period he was the main character in a public trial on charges of “agitation in favor of communism”. The international, local communist and Sovietophile newspapers mobilized some sectors of the public opinion in his favor. Constantinescu-Iași’s trial was one of the few moments of public visibility of communists at the time.⁷¹ The key positions he occupied from 1948 until mid-1970s allowed him to affect decision-making at the highest levels of party leadership.⁷² His most authoritative writings were on the history of the party and of the socialist movement in Romania. The rather ambivalent nature of Constantineascu-Iași’s activity is strengthened by his participation in the Commission of rehabilitation from 1965, a mirror-image of his prior involvement of in the 1947 purge commission. Of course, the latter was focused on the higher

⁶⁹ Andi Mihalache, *Istorie și practice discursive în România “democrat-populară”* (București: Editura Albatros, 2003), pp. 76-78.

⁷⁰For extensive details on M. Roller’s biography, especially on his activity during the interwar period see <http://militiaspirituala.ro/biografii>. After several arrests in Romania, in 1940 Roller leaves for Bessarabia, then reaches Moscow where he works for Ana Pauker. There, he attended the courses of Moscow University’s History Department. After 1944, he returns to Romania.

⁷¹ For details about Constantinescu-Iași political biography see: Vladimir Tismăneanu, *Ibidem*, Stelian Tănase, *Clienții lui tanti Varvara – istorii clandestine* (București: Humanitas, 2005), Adrian Cioroianu, *Ibidem*.

⁷²He was the president of the Society for historical science (from 1948 onwards) and of the Union of the scientific societies of the Romanian professors, the director of the National Committee of Sciences (1955-1974), president of the historical section from 1948-1955, vice-president of the RPR Academy (1948-1955).

education system, while the former was aimed at “investigating” the abuses of the Gheorghiu-Dej leadership against party members. But both, through their institutional and personnel consequences led to different re-writings of histories. Constantinescu-Iași presence in both moments certainly raises a question mark on the possibility of him being a source historiographical orthodoxy like in M. Roller’s case (who produced *both* censorship and dogma).

In his 1955 report at the Academy, Constantinescu-Iași argued that Romanian historiography *only* from that point on could truly produce socialist history. What had been written before was still tainted by bourgeois influence. For Constantinescu-Iași, the 1948 to 1955 period was that “of our cultural revolution as we go”. If one reads his statements in the context of the new elections, they seem like a validation for the new elite within the historical field, one ready to write, using Marxist-Leninist theses, a reconsidered and reformed national historiography. Along with their pupils, they were the first wave of socialist elite on the historical front. From the point of view of the paradigmatic struggles within history-production, Constantinescu-Iași did remain a highly influential representative of the internationalist camp with a view to Romanian modern and contemporary history well into late sixties.

Under the circumstances of Mihail Roller’s forced retirement of (1956)⁷³, the new group that caught the limelight at the Section of Historical Sciences, Philosophical Sciences, Economic and Legal Sciences was made up of a very specific specimen of historian-academician. They accepted the new socialist state and its developmental goals and were thoroughly integrated in the party-state institutions. At the same time, these historians had been educated and/or mentored

⁷³ In 1955, he was not included in the Romanian delegation at the Historians’ Congress in Rome. Upon his death, his obituary from the journal “Studii” (no. 3, 1958) was signed “a group of comrades.” It did not mention anymore the textbook, which for several years function as paradigmatic text in Romanian historiography: “Mihail Roller had an active contribution to the development of research in historical sciences. He published numerous works regarding the history of the Motherland, especially that of the working class in our country.”

within the pre-communist paradigms with little, superficial or ‘right-wing deviationist’ training in dialectical materialism. I believe that the term which best characterizes one group of these historians (Nestor, Vătășianu, Daicoviciu, Condurachi, Berza, Dionisie Pippidi, etc.) is that of *smenovekhovtsy*. The category describes those nationalist intellectuals who accepted to work for the communist regime because they envisaged it as a valid incarnation of the nation-building principle.⁷⁴ The second crucial category was that of *poputchik* (fellow traveler) and it applies to academicians such as Andrei Oțetea, Iorgu Iordan, or Emil Petrovici. These four categories – *praktiki*, *historian-censor*, *smenovekhovtsy*, and *poputchik* – indicate the various possibilities of personnel aggregation and of interest groups within the structures of history-production of the socialist state. Such pluralism under the umbrella of the party-line sets the stage for the institutional reform and conceptual shift in the Romanian historical field between 1963 and 1974.

The changes of personnel within the RPR Academy, at the level of the historical and literature subsections, were accompanied by three significant documents which put forth the directions of development for the following years. In July 1955, a new Statute for the Academy was issued and approved. Article no.3 of this document stated that “the Academy pursues research by its own initiative, at the request of the government, of various other institutions or state enterprises.” Another novelty was article no. 8, which contained the decision to create autonomous subsections for history, linguistic and literary studies, and the arts – all of them though composing the Section of history, language/literature, and art.⁷⁵ In February 1956, a *Hotărâre* (decision) was adopted at the end of the general session of the Academy. It emphasized

⁷⁴ For more details about the *Smena vekh* group: Mikhail Agursky, *The Third Rome: National Bolshevism in the USSR*, foreword by Leonard Schapiro (Boulder: Westview Press, 1987), Robert C. Tucker, *Stalin in Power – The Revolution from Above 1928-1941* (New York/London: W.W.Norton & Company, 1990), pp. 35-38; Robert C. Williams, “‘Changing Landmarks’ in Russian Berlin, 1922-1924”, *Slavic Review*, Vol. 27, No. 4 (Dec., 1968), pp. 581-593, Terry Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire*, pp. 9-15.

⁷⁵ Dorina Rusu, *Istoria Academiei*, p. 339.

the need for an increase in the role of the institution's sections, which "greatly overlook their responsibilities of guidance, coordination and particularly those of permanent control of the activity of the units they are made of." The same document called for "the strengthening of the social sciences institutes, especially of the Academy's Philosophy and Economy Institutes, with qualified cadres and by providing the practical conditions for the flourishing of their activity." Moreover, *Hotărârea* signaled a change of scientific reference at the level of the Academy by arguing for "expanding the publication exchange with foreign scientific bodies and for a decentralization of such interaction."⁷⁶ The two decisions (*Statutul* and *Hotărârea*) indicate a new organizational propensity toward the sections' autonomy in establishing research objectives, plans of action, and undergo scientific projects. As the following chapter will show, they also reflected the turn toward increased professionalization and better institutionalization of knowledge production.

It is also interesting to notice *Hotărârea* was drafted 5 years prior to the two 1961 UNESCO conventions that regulated the exchange of publications among international scientific and education institutions. Furthermore, 1955 was a turning point in the book production in Romania. It was the first year when the ratio between original (national) production and translations (mainly from Russian) was be in the favor of the former. At the same time, within the Party History Institute, the number of defended doctorates with topics from modern and contemporary history of the country will surpass the number of doctorates from abroad (mainly USSR).⁷⁷

⁷⁶*Idem*, p. 343.

⁷⁷ Marian Pruteanu, *Memoria comunismului: Fondul ISISP din Biblioteca Centrală Universitară din București* (http://www.bcub.ro/continut/unibib/memoria_comunismului.php)

Another piece in the puzzle of the 1955-1956 turnaround on the historical front was a report signed by A. Oțetea, C. Daicoviciu (drafted along with Barbu Cămpina, Georges Haupt and Vasile Maciu) entitled *În legătură cu unele fenomene care frânează activitatea istoricilor români* [Report on the Issues Hindering the Activity of Romanian Historians]. This document was created at Pavel Țugui's request, head of the Section on Culture and Science of the Central Committee, who presented it to the RWP leadership.⁷⁸ It was a crucial instance of party-encouraged challenge against *rollerism*. For the first time, this paradigm was publicly chastised for being antinational, antipatriotic, and a danger to "the people's most sacred rights" - its history and language.

However, the expansion of the Academy did also raise the issue of party control over the new comers. As I already mentioned in the introduction, the Academy's president, Traian Săvulescu, was painfully aware of both the shortcomings of body that was born in 1948 and the dangers of a sudden, unchecked growth. In his letter to Gheorghiu-Dej, he did admit that "we mde away with harmful (*vătămatoare*) elements from our recent past, but we did not put anything in their stead."⁷⁹ In 1955, the Academy faced a problem of both control and leadership. On the second count, the presidium of this body simply could not deal with the amount of work they were faced with. Both party documents and Săvulescu recommended the creation of positions of sceintific secretaries and better communication between the instiututes and the

⁷⁸ Țugui is another puzzling party censor who was involved in the new institutional and conceptual transformations between 1955 and 1960. He was an alternate member of the Central Committee of the PMR until June 1960, head of the literature and art sector of the Propaganda and Agitation Section; deputy minister of culture (1953-1955) head of the Culture and Science Section of the C.C. of PMR (until 1960) and member of the scientific council of the Party History Institute (from 1958 onwards). In Florica Dobre, *Ibidem*, pp. 593. For a version of the historians' report see Pavel Țugui, *Istoria și limba română în vremea lui Gheorghiu-Dej* (București: Editura I. Cristoiu, 1999), pp. 43-54.

⁷⁹ „Scrisoarea Acad. Traian Săvulescu către tov. Gheorghe Gheorghiu Dej”, *Ibidem*, f. 20.

Academy's leadership.⁸⁰ In fact, the inadequacy of the Secretariat and of the communication within the pyramidal structure of the Academy will be problems that continued to mar this body's activity for the following decade. This situation will be used by the party for devising projects of better planning and increased centralization of science.

One solution found in 1956 for both purposes of management and ideological accommodation was the creation of a party committee within the Academy that was to encompass party members and candidates who worked in the research and administrative units of this institution. Such a body was supposed to be created for each representation of the Academy in the country (Bucharest, Cluj, Iasi, etc). In Bucharest, the party committee was made up of 11 members and 4 candidates. The secretary of the committee was linguist and fellow traveler Al. Graur, who at the time was also the general director of the Academy's publishing house. This body supervised and coordinated the activity of the party organizations existent in some of the institutes of the Academy. For 33 research and administrative units there were only 20 such organizations. In 13 units there was no such party presence, including the Museum of Antiquities, which will be transformed in the Institute of Archeology. Additionally, of these party organizations only 13 had more than 10 members and only four over 30. The Central Committee noticed the fragmented and chaotic nature of party presence within the Academy. The party committee had therefore three fundamental functions: unifying the activity of individual party organizations; improving party involvement in the implementation of planned science; and, ensuring the ideological acculturation of the various epistemic communities.

⁸⁰ "Dare de seamă asupra activității științifice a Academiei RPR pe anul 1954", ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.24/1955, ff. 59-61.

Moreover, the RWP also admitted the imperative of increasing party membership among the academicians.⁸¹

E. Conclusions

The first conclusion about the year of 1955 as compared to 1948 is twofold. On the one side, it represented, both institutionally and methodologically, an upsurge of the *positive*, inclusionary aspects of the Romanian version of cultural revolution. On the other, an important section of the epistemic community had singled out its enemy, that is, the left-deviation of *rollerism*, the post-1947 paradigm in the historical field. Therefore, the year 1955 marked a slow but definite shift of professional systems of reference. The second conclusion is related to the impetus suggested by the Statute and *Hotărâre* toward a responsabilization of the Academy's sections and subsections (the historical one being among of them). The changing-of-the-guard and the thematic shifts history production will further crystallize in the second half of the fifties in the process of the drafting of the treatise *Istoria României*. These were the first signs of a process of a re-organization of "the planning of science" along the lines of self-Sovietization. They will prepare the ground for the new organization of the historical field which peaked at the beginning of the sixties.

While keeping in mind the serious setback caused by the 1958-1960 purges among Romanian intellectuals, by 1956, only 6 years removed from the disbandement of the 'old'

⁸¹ „Referat asupra constituirii unui comitet de partid care să cuprindă unitățile din București ale Academiei RPR”, 2 februarie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.20/1956, ff. 1-3 and ff. 24-27. An additional problem was that the various party organizations of research and administrative units belonged to the party committee of the *raions* the respective institutes were in. This significantly lowered the impact of the party and prevented unified ideological pressure. Unsurprisingly, the attendance to the evening (*serală*) university of Marxism-leninism affiliated to the Academy reached in 1954 only 60% (which in itself might be an overinflated ratio). See „Referat cu privire la munca organizațiilor de partid din institutele de învățământ superior și din institutele de cercetări științifice”, 28 octombrie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, ne. 17/1954, f. 47.

Academy, historians managed to regain epistemic recognition and obtain a voice within the regime's politics of knowledge. The overall narrative of those years among historians (with lasting impact even on post-1989 accounts about history of historiography) was structured according to a heroic emplotment. The *Nation* was snatched from the jaws of the Stalinist school of falsification (*rollerism*) and historical studies resurged as true science at its service. However, at the core of the institutional and personnel process, starting from the Academy's 1948 transformation up until the elections of 1955, lied the reality of gradually balancing repression and exclusion with recognition and co-option. On the long run, the Romanian history-production will become a prisoner of this carrot-stick game, which prize was epistemic prestige and the preeminence over the community's imagination. The party-line will inexorably take on national tenets and, by 1974, it will already own another official historiographical paradigm synthesized in and symbolized by *The Political Program of the Romanian Communist Party* (adopted at the Eleventh Party Congress). The initial repression of the years of 'High Stalinism' was not the only cause for the historical field's inability to provide thematical and methodological alternatives to a Nation-centered historiography. Critical alternatives to the regime's orthodoxy did not develop because the respective epistemic communities never functioned outside the discursive space defined by the regime.⁸² Most historians, regardless of the category they fell into, functioned within the party's representational monopoly because, as we shall see, their *own* views about the writing of history, their *own* epistemic positions met with, overlapped, or were accommodated to the political discourse of the party.

⁸² Christian Joppke makes a similar point when explaining the scarcity of open opposition and of dissent from the part of East German intellectuals to the SED discourse monopoly over founding conceptual landmarks such as "socialist democracy" or "antifascism". See Christian Joppke, "Intellectuals, Nationalism, and the Exit from Communism: The Case of East Germany", *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 37, No. 2 (Apr., 1995), pp. 213-241 and *East German Dissidents and the Revolution of 1989: Social Movement in a Leninist Regime* (London: Macmillan, 1995).

II

Co-option and Control: The Changing Profile of the Historical Front

A. Preliminaries – An Overview after the Great Break

The 1948 transformation of the Academy combined with the extensive purges of the higher education system qualifies as a Great Break, Romanian style, within the scientific field. It took place in the context of the beginning of “the decisive offensive of socialism on the capitalist elements of town and country” (Stalin).¹ Hierarchies were reversed, the old elites (cultural and political) were repressed, ideological orthodoxy was imposed, and ultimately a new system of planned science came into being. But, by the end of the first Five-Year Plan, the Romanian Workers’ Party (RWP) was facing the challenges of consolidation: first, the party was mired into factional struggles; second, the socialist offensive placed it into a position of “systemic overstretch” (Péteri). It struggled to both control and organize the cadres for the purpose of implementing the developmental tasks of its program. And third, the radicalism of the initial socialist offensive left it at odds with its own society. In other words, the RWP was in search of identity. Or, to paraphrase Kenneth Jowitt, after the original revolutionary breakthrough sustained national development was called for. With the death of Stalin in 1953, the entire Soviet bloc, under the impulse of the transformations instrumented by Nikita Khrushchev at the ‘Moscow center’, entered a new historical phase. The emphasis laid on “regime individuality”

¹ Quoted in David Jorvasky, “Soviet Scientists and the Great Break,” *Deadalus*, vol. 89, no. 3, The Russian Intelligentsia (Summer, 1960), pp. 562-580.

combined with ‘the spirit of Genève’ forced each of the Central and Eastern European states into policy re-assessment.²

On the historical front, the institutional, personnel, and thematic changes developed during the first stage in the evolution of the Romanian communist system formed a specific “academic regime”³. The latter was characterized by the following features: topical and structural emulation of the Soviet model; branch orthodoxy based upon a textbook duplicating Stalin’s *Short Course*; an all-out rejection of the pre-communist history-production, personnel included; and, last but not least, the personalization of historiographical dogma. But, by 1955, just as the party-state was experiencing the tensions inherent to the adaptation of the Stalinist blueprint, the community of historians entered a new phase. Its dynamics were defined by two fundamental dichotomies: ‘democratization’⁴ vs. professionalization and purity vs. antidogmatism. This paradoxical situation is best presented in a statement made by Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, the Romanian communist leader, at the September-October 1955 Central Committee Plenum:

Recently ...a wind of liberal change is blowing amongst the ranks of the intellectuals. Unhealthy activities have taken place, which nature must be clarified with care and patience, without pointing fingers, without calling them reactionaries. We must explain them the direction of our party’s domestic and foreign policy. The intellectuals think that the current international relaxation means internal liberalization. And for them the latter equals to a return to the old state of things. Such illusions must be shattered. We must not encourage them. We should speak to them openly and show

² In this paragraph I am employing some of the terminology that Kenneth Jowitt developed in *Revolutionary Breakthroughs and National Development: the Case of Romania, 1944-1965* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971) and *New World Disorder: the Leninist Extinction* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992).

³ György Péteri defined an academic regime as “a set of historically, politically, and culturally contingent institutions and practices that organize cognitive (academic) activity and integrate it into the totality of social reproduction.” In György Péteri, *Academia and State Socialism. Essays on the Political History of Academic Life in Post-1945 Hungary and Eastern Europe* (Boulder, Colorado: Social Science Monographs distributed by Columbia University Press, 1998), p. 2. Also see Péteri’s more recent development of the concept for both the Hungarian and the Central European contexts: David-Fox and Péteri, *Academia in Upheaval* and György Péteri, “The Communist Idea of the University: an Essay Inspired by the Hungarian Experience,” pp. 139-165 in John Connelly and Michael Grütter (eds.), *Universities under Dictatorship* (University Park, Penn.: The Pennsylvania University State University Press, 2005)

⁴ I use this concept as it was defined by John Connelly, that is, “guaranteeing proportionate representation of the laboring strata in all institutions. The figures were never achieved nowhere but the effect of striving for it was revolutionary change.” See John Connelly, *Captive Universities*, p. 227.

that this is not possible. International relaxation cannot find a domestic counterpart. Internal relaxation cannot materialize into freeing the most reactionary elements from our prisons, pursuing reconciliation, weakening class struggle. On the contrary, even if we were to deny it, class struggle does exist.⁵

Under the impact of Khrushchev's 'Secret Speech' (in 1956 at the CPSU XXth Congress) and of the second de-Stalinization (in 1961 at the CPSU XXIIInd Congress), the RWP gradually diminished the employment of the principle of class struggle in its official pronouncements about present and future objectives. By 1957, the head of the Department of Propaganda and Culture (DPC), Leonte Răutu was announcing that Stalin's thesis about 'the sharpening of class struggle' "is not a necessity in all countries. We cannot point to a sharpening of the class struggle in our country."⁶ Nevertheless, according to the same official, revolutionary vigilance for ideological purity purposes remained paramount.

Another factor that fueled the two dichotomies listed earlier was the role of the party. Despite accepting the imperative of more opened and gentler policies, the RWP did preserve its absolute right of intervention and control. In the famous report of the Romanian delegation that participated at the XXth CPSU Congress (March 1956), Gheorghiu-Dej stated that "the foremost guarantee of the strengthening of the popular democratic state is party control. Without it there is the danger of serious errors and mistakes, the danger that certain institutions or officials will

⁵ Plenara CC al PMR din 30 septembrie-1 octombrie 1955, ANIC, Fond CC al PCR, Cădelarie, file no. 74/1955, f.32 in Dan Cătănuș (ed.), *Intelectuali români în arhivele comunismului* (București: Nemira, 2006). In March 1956, Gheorghiu-Dej added to the principle formulated in 1955: "our task is to help them ['old' intellectuals] to find the new path of building socialism – with patience and perseverance, with the intention to make the most of their talents and knowledge." In "1956, 23-25 martie. Raportul delegației PMR, prezentat de Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, cu privire la lucrările Congresului al XX-lea al CC al PCUS" (fragment) in Alina Tudor and Dan Cătănuș (eds.), *O destalinizare ratată. Culisele cazului Miron Constantinescu-Iosif Chișinevschi* (București: Editura Elion, 2001), p. 47.

⁶ "Stenograma cuvântării tovarășului Leonte Răutu în fața scriitorilor, în ziua de 17 ianuarie 1957", ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.6/1957, ff. 1-16 in Tismaneanu și Vasile, *Perfectul Acrobat*, p. 342. At the same meeting, Răutu added that "we must show the role of the state as builder of socialism, the role of the party as leading force..." (p.343).

degenerate.”⁷ In 1955, at the IIInd RWP Congress, the communist regime adopted, both in the country and within the academic realm, an approach of simultaneously fulfilling the goals of the cultural revolution (proletarianization, the creation of a new elite, and the transformation of consciousness) and promoting the reformed old intelligentsia, the compliant bourgeois specialists. As Traian Săvulescu emphatically declared in the opening of the institution’s general session of July 1955:

The working class and its party consistently struggle not only for the defense of our national sovereignty and independence, but also for the defense of cultural values, against everything that hinders our progress. [...] The struggle between the old and the new does not mean the complete denial of the past. [...] Culture, science, and the arts are built in time and with a great deal of effort through the contribution of all generations.⁸

The speech of the Academy’s president was signaling a policy change both regarding tradition and the surviving ‘bourgeois specialists’. It opened a session where, as I have shown in the previous chapter, new leaders within the historical front asserted themselves. They were seconded by party-scholars who were to play a tremendous role in the RWP strategies of system building and intra-bloc emancipation. The 1955 elections at the Academy exemplified RWP’s policy of syncretism both at the level of cadre recruitment and in what concerned the scientific agenda. At a meeting of the Central Committee’s Department of Agitation and Propaganda, on March 1955, summoned with the purpose of evaluating the activity of this institution’s sectors dealing with supervising the scientific activity, Leonte Răutu emphasized that sciences have not

⁷ “1956, 23-25 martie. Raportul delegației PMR...” *Ibidem*, p. 45. As most analysts of the case of Romanian communism have emphasized, de-Stalinization in this country was still born. The document I have quoted was an artifice used by the RWP leadership in order not to reveal the entire content of Khrushchev’s Secret Speech (and implicitly of his condemnation of Stalin’s rule). The PMR also proceeded to discuss the XXth CPSU Congress only at party meetings, behind closed doors. For more details on the reception of the Secret Speech in Romania see Vladimir Tismaneanu and Doina Jela, *Ungaria 1956: revolta minților și sfârșitul mitului communist* (București: Curtea Veche, 2006) and Tismaneanu, *Stalinism for All Seasons*, pp. 142-148.

⁸ Traian Săvulescu, “Știința în slujba poporului și a construirii socialismului”, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no. 70/1955, ff.20-21.

evolved in a satisfactory manner. The reason was the inability of correctly employing the existing resources. He urged for the creation of “a circle of multiple generations” that would be made up from individuals selected on the basis of their ability to produce the best results with a view to the tasks set up by the party in their respective fields.⁹ On the same occasion, Ghe. Apostol (then first secretary of the RWP’s Central Committee) defined the imperative of an integrative stand in the scientific field: “we are a governing party and our duty is to our people. We need to bring people closer to us. If they are loyal to us they become loyal to the party, subsequently enhancing its prestige.”¹⁰ With the communist regime entering its consolidation phase, the transformation of the higher education and the scientific field focused more on unity rather than insulation. The cultural revolution did not move only forward, it reached to the past as well. Traian Săvulescu’s address, in 1956, “90 Years of Academic Life in Our Country” made a direct connection between cultural unity and political emancipation. As the RWP was searching for an identity in the aftermath of the XXth PCSU Congress, the role of science changed, bringing along with it significant alterations both at a personnel and thematic level.¹¹

The period from 1955 to 1963 can be considered a continuous timeframe that is essentially defined by ambiguity and synthesis. It would be consonant with the similar experience of the Soviet intellectual life’s overall pattern, as it has been defined by Michael David –Fox:

in the end, the term “Soviet model” may not be adequate to encompass the mind-bending zigs and zags of cultural revolution, or the manner in which varying strands of communist agendas competed and were enacted in different subperiods of Soviet, or more broadly state socialist, *pattern of*

⁹ “Stenograma ședinței de analiza activității desfășurate de sectoarele știință la care a participat tov. Gheorghe Apostol”, 4 martie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.27/1955, f.35.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*, f. 43.

¹¹ Traian Săvulescu, *90 ani de viață academică în țara noastră* (București: Ed. Academiei), 1956, p. 15. Also see Rusu, *Istoria Academiei*, p. 344. According to one author, Săvulescu’s two speeches greatly annoyed Mihai Roller, then still the chief ideologue of the historical front at the time. The representatives of the Agitprop added lists of names of socialist heroes and communist intellectuals that were omitted by Săvulescu when he delivered both speeches. See Țugui, *Istoria și limba*, pp. 103-104.

intellectual life – one not reducible to merely certain types of institutions, modes of party-state administration, events of any of the particular upheavals or retreats, or other necessary but not sufficient features. It seems rather that the dynamic itself of revolutionary assault and self-limiting *volte-face*, spurred on by pursuit of conflict-laden social, ideological, and modernizing missions and practices, is what constitutes a pattern of the Soviet style.¹²

Indeed, in the Romanian case, starting with 1955, the RWP targeted both cooption and control. On the one hand, it aimed to achieve prestige amongst scientists in order to involve them more profoundly in building socialism within the country. On the other, it was acquiescent of, especially after 1956 (under the shock of the Hungarian Revolution), the danger of ‘rightism’¹³. It therefore continued its policies of creating *vydvizhentsy*, the red elite able to sustain, reproduce, and represent the regime. Starting with 1955, the historical field transformed because of a change in the landmarks of building socialism in Romania. Gheorghe-Gheorghiu Dej clearly formulated, in *Pravda* of all places in 1956, the shifting ‘dialectics’ of control and co-option in RWP’s politics of culture:

combining commitment to the general international goals and tasks of the working class with the defense of the national interests of one’s own people, expressing correctly, on the basis of Marxism-Leninism, its concerns – this is the prerequisite for strengthening communist parties, for developing their relationship with the masses, for the unity between the all the democratic forces from within the people around these parties.¹⁴

He was, indeed, conveying his own understanding of what Khrushchev coined as the “all people’s party” principle. But he also laid the foundation for a core formula of Romanian national Stalinism: “the continuous moral-political unity of the people” as “the foundation of the

¹² Michael David-Fox, “The Assault on the Universities and the Dynamics of Stalin’s ‘Great Break,’ 1928-1932,” pp. 73-103 in David-Fox and Péteri, *Academia*, p. 97.

¹³ See David-Fox’s discussion of Lars Lih interpretation of this concept: “a notion of infection from bourgeois specialists that could touch any party member [...] the right deviation ‘was defined less by any specific set of beliefs than by the logic of Stalin’s attitude.’ [...] applies to a political culture revolving around combating infection.” Michael David-Fox, *Revolution of the Mind. Higher Learning Among the Bolsheviks, 1918-1929* (Ithaca/London: Cornell University Press, 1997), p. 190; Lars Lih, introduction to Lih et al., *Stalin’s Letters to Molotov* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), p. 49.

¹⁴ „Articol scris de tov. Gheorghe Gherghiu-Dej ce urmează să fie publicat în ziarul Pravda”, 25 aprilie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.52/1956, f. 10.

regime of popular-democracy”.¹⁵ He signaled two directions: an expressive appreciation toward autochthonous resources of legitimation; a continuous commitment to ideological refinement in the process of systemic consolidation.

In retrospect, we can say that these two directions functioned complementary to each other under the umbrella of the process by which the regime clarified its identity. A ‘modernist culture of the *vydvizhenets*’ (Fitzpatrick)¹⁶ appeared. It was centered on the proud assertion of both individual and collective revolutionary identity, which historical soundtrack was created with the help of the ‘old guard’ (aided by younger historians whom they mentored or greatly influenced). This was necessary because “the consciousness of the masses is the mirror image of a state’s strength [...] but it does not appear spontaneously. Scientists on the historical front are called on, first and foremost, to strengthen socialist patriotism.”¹⁷ In this context, the present chapter states that, from 1955 to 1963, the historical front changed, gaining a polycentric profile. Various groups converged to the same point: the creation of both the ideological and infrastructural basis for the master-narrative about Romania’s evolution into socialism. This argument is in fact a particularization of one of the fundamental theses of Romanian communism’s history as it was formulated by Vladimir Tismaneanu, namely that “the origins of national Stalinism are to be found in the reactions to the Twentieth CPSU Congress.”¹⁸ By this statement one should not understand that the employment of national symbols or discourses was a first only from 1956 onwards within the Soviet bloc. I previously discussed the popular front type of flirtations that existed during the coalition years Eastern European countries followed by the affirmation of

¹⁵ “Pentru victoria deplină a socialismului în patria noastră, pentru pace și bunăstarea poporului!”, Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, *Articole și Cuvântări 1959-1961* (București: Editura Politică, 1961), pp. 381.

¹⁶ Sheila Fitzpatrick, *Education and Social Mobility in the Soviet Union 1921-1934* (Cambridge/London/New York/Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1979), p. 254.

¹⁷ „Educația patriotică și sarcinile științei istoriei”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 6, an X, 1957, pp. 10.

¹⁸ See Tismaneanu, *Stalinism for All*, p. 148.

vague notion of socialist patriotism that was predicated on an unflinching attachment to the Soviet Union and Stalin. However, my reading of Tismaneanu's statement is that the turn to regime individuality, as both decision of and reaction to de-Stalinization, opened the door to particular *un-reformed* communist regimes in creatively defining transhistorically the Nation as *ethnically homogeneous popular community*.¹⁹ To put it differently, the phenomenon indicated by Vladimir Tismaneanu was the result of some parties persevering into cooking Stalinist civilization with the ingredients available locally.²⁰

In October 1954, an internal overview of Direction of Agitation and Propaganda (DAP, which then became the DPC) about the party organizations' activity within the institutes of research concluded that there was not enough mobilization among both party and non-party members in order to overcome "narrow 'technicism'". It recommended that the current activity of collecting primary sources (i.e., archival documents) should be doubled by "their theoretical generalization."²¹ A month later, at a meeting of the DAP representatives with "the scientists working in the field of history", Alexandru Vianu (graduate of the Lomonosov University in Moscow and assistant professor specialized in the history of the USSR) condemned the historical

¹⁹ Even here there are precedents in the early postwar period. Martin Mevius described the conflicting national agendas of communist parties in Eastern Europe in the aftermath of the Second World War in reference to national minorities: the Germans for the Poles, Czechoslovaks, and the Hungarians; the Hungarians for the Czechoslovaks; the problem of Transylvania between the Hungarians and the Romanians. These are the first instances when communist parties or some of their representatives begin talkin about "ethnically pure countries". For example see Mevius, *Agents of Moscow*, p. 114 or p. 119. Also, for the Czechoslovak case, see Abrams, *Struggle for the Soul* and Benjamin Frommer, *National Cleansing: Retribution against Nazi Collaborators in Postwar Czechoslovakia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005). For the discussions over Transylvania in the immediate aftermath of the war and their consequences on the position of Hungarians in communist Romania see Botoni, *Transylvania roşie*. The quarrels of the Comintern period and of the early postwar years between Romanian and Hungarian communists over Transylvania will play a tremendous role in the discourse of the RWP's Roumanisation.

²⁰ Balazs Trencsenyi used the formula "everybody had to 'cook' with the ingredients available laocally" with reference to "the emergence of political modernity and its ambivalent interaction with local frameworks." If one considers Stalinism as a form of illiberal modernity, then I think the transposition of his quote can work. See Trencsenyi, 'Imposed Authenticity', *Ibidem*, p. 25.

²¹ "Referat cu privire la munca organizațiilor de partid din instituele de învățământ superior și din institutetele de cercetări științifice", ANIC, Fond CC al PCR – Secția de Agitație și Propagandă, no. 17/1954, f.48.

front for not producing, in ten years of popular democracy, not even *one* treatise of history. Ladislau Bányai (at the time the rector of the Bolyai University in Cluj) proclaimed that “despite the hard work of our historians, history [as science] is still backward in relation with the tasks of building socialism.”²² Moreover, these internal discussions were officialized in Traian Săvulescu’s 1955 Address at the Academy’s session:

time has come for the Academy to give precise tasks to our scientists, especially to those working there, in order for them to produce monographs and treatise in their fields. On the basis of the existing positive material, these will comprise the problems which lie at the heart of our current situation, which are the core of our scientific knowledge. They will be our contribution to the development of world science.²³

His call would find confirmation, in the case of the historical front, at the highest level. At the Second RWP Congress (December 1955), Gheroghe-Gheorghiu Dej, by then undisputed leader, set up the task that will dominate history-production until 1964:

to create, with the help of a large collective of scientific researchers, a new history of Romanian that, on the basis of Marxism-Leninism, will be a synthesis of all that has been achieved in our country in the field of historical science. It will be a great step forward for the development of this science particularly in what concerns the clarification of fundamental issues of our history, such as the creation and the development of the Romanian people, the contemporary period, or periodization.²⁴

National history was not the only master-narrative awaiting formulation. The Second Congress also set up the task of the writing of the RWP’s history. The fate of these two epic challenges for the historical front will fundamentally shape its profile, evolution and role in the process of building identity for a regime fervently searching for one.

In order to rise to the challenge, the Academy soon created a trans-institutional and interdisciplinary framework for the application of the desiderata of collective, extensive research

²² “Stenogramă luată în ziua de 17 noiembrie 1954, în sesiunea Secției Propagandă și Agitație a Comitetului Central cu oameni de știință din domeniul istoriei”, Fond CC al PCR – Secția de Agitație și Propagandă, no. 61/1954, f. 9 and f. 18.

²³ Traian Săvulescu, *Ibidem*, f.65.

²⁴ “Sarcinile de mare răspundere puse de Congresul al II-lea al PMR în fața istoricilor”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 1, an 9, pp. 9.

on fundamental national identity matters. At the beginning of 1956, the “The Commission for the Study of the Romanian People’s formation and of its Language” came about. It was made up of the most important historians, linguists, ethnographers, and archeologists who were active within the higher education. It was presided by academician Iorgu Iordan, one of RPR’s most important “fellow travelers”. He was former ambassador to the USSR (1945-1947) and, in 1957 he became vice-president of the Academy (until 1966).²⁵

More importantly though, the calls for syntheses were supplanted with a push for the professionalization of history. The aims of the Department of Agitation and Propaganda work plan for 1954 (first trimester) were the strengthening of the Academy through the re-organization of its section and the election of new members.²⁶ Moreover, the DAP appreciated the fact that “within the Academy, the majority of the established scientific cadres were successfully involved in the construction of socialism in our country.” It also took note of the professional inadequacy of some of those working at the Academy’s institutes. One of the examples about the latter case was none other than Victor Cheresteşiu, the director of the History Institute in Bucharest.²⁷ In order to be able to fulfill its grand goal (i.e, the treatise of national history), the party followed two directions: ensuring the creation of a new generation of historians and the provision of an

²⁵ Iordan, along with Al. Graur and Al. Rosetti, took the brunt of the 1951-1952 party campaign against linguists, a delayed consequence of the publication of Stalin’s “On Marxism in Linguistics” (June 1950). By 1954, all three of them were rehabilitated. Iordan’s memoirs clearly identify Mihai Roller as the main enemy in the reestablishing of “true national scientific values” (he uses the term “evil spirit” – *duhul rău*). In 1955, Al. Graur will become director of the Academy’s Publishing House. His main task was to promote national monographic scientific publications. On the Commission and the 1952 campaign see Iorgu Iordan, *Memorii*, vol. III (Bucureşti: Editura Eminescu, 1979), p. 331 and pp. 94-122 and Dan Berindei, *Istoria Academiei*, p. 343. For the changes at the Academy’s Publication House see “Referat cu privire la activitatea Editurii Academiei RPR Sectorul Stiinte Sociale,” 23 noiembrie, ANIC, Fond CC al PCR – Secţia de Agitaţie şi Propagandă, no.64/1955, ff. 114-127.

²⁶ “Plan de muncă al Secţiei Ştiinţe şi Învăţământ pe trimestrul I 1954”, 9 ianuarie, no. 3/1954, ANIC, Fond CC al PCR – Secţia de Agitaţie şi Propagandă, no.3/1954, f.2.

²⁷ “Notă informativă privind unele aspecte ale activităţii Academiei RPR”, 28 aprilie, ANIC, Fond CC al PCR – Secţia de Agitaţie şi Propagandă, no. 64/1955, f.9.

institutional and research framework that would give respectability both to themselves and to their work.

B. The Fall of Mihail Roller and New Structures of Control

As seen in a previous chapter, the process of reforming the historical front could be achieved only through a transformation of its leadership. Mihai Roller's legitimacy, the chief party endorsed historian, was essentially defined by his successful dismantling of pre-communist structures and personnel of the profession. By 1955, however, the "luminous path of socialist culture" began to comprise the very people that Roller fought and was fighting against. In a sense, though, Roller prepared the ground for his own fall from grace. In parallel with the imposition of his textbook as dogma in the field, his other important project was the monumental series of *Documente privind istoria României*. In his memoirs, David Prodan (self-defined 'national' historian, academician in 1955) considered that "the collection turned out to be a school" for the specialists in the field.²⁸ In other words, Roller, in his eagerness to consecrate his domination over the historical front, brought together both red and bourgeois historians. All of those who challenged his reign in the second half of the fifties worked under the umbrella of this project. The origins of the milieu²⁹'s later *modus vivendi* can be traced back to this collective endeavor (along with the creation of *Indexul colecției Hurmuzaki*, which focused on medieval documents). Of course, both the *Index* and *Documente* were affected by Roller's political objectives, but at a time of radical de-structuring of the profession, these two projects allowed for

²⁸ David Prodan, *Memorii*, p. 125.

²⁹ John Connely defined this concept as "a self-reproducing unit with its own variables, habits and demands for loyalty". John Connely, *Captive Universities...*, p. 5.

the recuperation of previously purged or arrested historians, while fueling the rise to prominence of others.

Another source of reproducing the ‘bourgeois’ academic regime’s values and of survival for its personnel was the continued development of archeology during ‘high Stalinism’. Roller stressed their importance and fought for their financing and preservation. His main reason was the emphasis posed on the *internal factor* as part of the Sovietization of Romanian historiography. This meant that archeologists were to bring to the surface material proof of a Dacian civilization developed enough to counter and minimize the impact of the Roman conquest. Another explanation for Roller’s emphasis on archeology was the ‘discovery’ of the Slavic influences in the process of the Romanian people formation.³⁰ Moreover, as the writing of the first volume of *History of Romania* progressed, the pre-communist group of archeologists only grew stronger, for their professional priorities grew increasingly closer to those of the party. As we shall see, the rise of people such as C. Daicoviciu or E. Condurachi was intertwined with Roller’s demise.³¹ Overall, it can be said that, after 1948, the community of historians was indeed hit hard during the 1951-1952 purges generated by the RWP’s campaign against the “right-wing” deviation. Most of those who will later become involved in the project of the treatise would either have to go through public shaming sessions or will be arrested. But, the

³⁰ Liviu Pleșa, „Mihail Roller și „stalinizarea” istoriografiei românești”, *Annals of the University of Alba Iulia History* (Annales Universitatis Apulensis Series Historica), issue: 10/I / 2006, p. 171. For an account of the archeological site as a school see Costantiniu, *Ibidem.*, pp. 70-73. For the regime’s emphasis at the time on the development of archeology see Ion Opriș, *Istoricii și Securitatea*, vol. I (București: Editura Enciclopedică, 2004) and vol. II (București: Editura Enciclopedică, 2006). Two individual cases are most famous in terms of recycling procommunist historians for purposes described in this section: Petre P. Panaitescu and Vladimir Dumitrescu. Both were deeply involved in the Iron Guard movement; both were initially arrested as “war criminals”. Both were ‘saved’ by Roller and worked for his projects without the right to signature (Panaitescu used the penname of Al. Grecu, while Dumitrescu that of D. Vlad).

³¹ Florian Matei-Popescu, „Imaginea Daciei romane în istoriografia românească între 1945 și 1960”, *SCIIVA*, tomul 58, nr. 3-4, 2007, pp. 265-288.

field proved to have a sort of revolving door, for by 1955 many of them were gradually reintegrated in the historical front.³²

Another development that seriously weakened Roller's hegemony was the release from prison of historians associated to the so-called "dignitaries' group" (and of others previously considered extremely reactionary 'elements'). From 1955-1956, people such as Constantin C. Giurescu, Victor Papacostea, Teofil Sauciuc-Săveanu, Ion Nistor, Ștefan Meteș, I. D. Suciu, Silviu Dragomir, Ion Hudiță, Ion Lupaș, etc. either returned to their homes or were temporary in special settlements. This development exemplified the shifting priorities of the regime in reference to the historical field. Roller's "interpretative autarchy"³³ in relation to pre-communist historiography did not fit the bill of the master narrative that the party sought for. New thematic and methodological priorities ran in direct conflict with *rollerism*. Therefore, the process of re-professionalization that began in 1955 on the historical front made Roller the odd man out.

Anticipating my later analysis, three points need to be stressed for the case of the "has beens" (*foști*) who were recycled by the communist regime. The first is that most of them were only gradually reintegrated in the profession. They started as collaborators at the Academy's institutes, many a times without regular pay and doing work that did not correspond to their skills, education, and experience (e.g., gathering information, translations, or the creation of bibliographies and research listings). By 1959-1960, most of them had the right to publish again under their own signature. Starting with the second half of the sixties some of them will also be granted various distinctions by the communist state. The second is that at the end of the fifties,

³² For details about the 1951-1953 offensive against historians see Prodan, *ibidem*, pp. 66-70; Michalache, *Ibidem*, pp. 70-73, Florin Müller, *Politică și istoriografie în România 1948-1964* (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Neremia Napocae, 2003), Constantiniu, *Ibidem*, pp. 85-103, Opriș, *Istoricii și Securitatea*, vol. I (București: Editura Enciclopedică, 2004) and vol. II (București: Editura Enciclopedică, 20056), and Cătănuș (ed.), *Intelectualii români*.

³³ Andi Mihalache, "Iluminismul transilvan în istoriografia perioadei 1948-1965", *Annales Universitatis Apulensis, Series Historica*, 4-5/2000-2001, p. 197

most of them did not receive immediately retirement pay in accordance to their job background. But, as their profile became more visible within the academic community and in the corridors of power, these historians would regain some (if not most) of their social status and a lot of their symbolic position. And third, which is most important, their rehabilitation was facilitated by the direct intervention of high-ranked officials such as Petru Groza, Miron Constantinescu, or Athanasie Joja.³⁴ For example, a Securitate informer reported in 1955 that a group of historians in Cluj knew that “Groza intervened for the release of Silviu Dragomir and Ion Lupaş in order for them to be able to return to the university and have once again the possibility to work.”³⁵ In his memoirs, Dinu C. Giurescu provided a similar account regarding the re-employment of his father, Constantin C. Giurescu, and the improvement of the financial situation of his grandfather, the geographer Simion Mehedinţi.³⁶ The officialization of this policy came with the creation of a commission for the evaluation of those historians purged from the University and the Academy. Despite Iosif Chişinevschi’s opposition, during the Academy’s 1955 July session, a list was issued with those historians who were considered for being reinstated to their positions of either full academicians (Ioan Lupaş, Silviu Dragomir or N. Bănescu) or standing ones (Ştefan Bazdechi, George Fotino and Vasile Grecu).³⁷ With only few exceptions (e.g., Ion Hudiţă), the

³⁴ Petru Groza was the prime-minister in the first communist government and, since 1955, the President of the National Assembly. Miron Constantinescu was first vice-president of the Council of Ministers and Minister of Education (1956-1957). Athanasie Joja replaced Constantinescu as Minister of Culture and Education and, from 1958 until 1960, he was also vice-president of the Council of Ministers.

³⁵ Oprea, *Ibidem*, vol. II, p. 312.

³⁶ Dinu Giurescu describes a meeting, in January 1956, between Groza and his father during which the former allegedly stated that “professor, I know that what happened was wrong, but from now on things will be better, you’ll see.” Dinu C. Giurescu, *De la Sovromconstrucţii nr. 6 la Academia Română. Amintiri. Mărturii* (Bucureşti: Editura Meronia, 2008), p. 216. Simion Mehedinţi’s situation was settled by Roller himself, who, though stressing the reactionary nature of the geographer scholarship and political views (geopolitics and the fact that he supported at one point the Iron Guard), justified the allocation of an academician pension based on Mehedinţi’s undeniable essential contribution to the field of general geography. See M. Roller, “Referat despre activitatea Prof. S. Mehedinţi,” ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secţia de Propagandă şi Agitaţie, no. 11/1954, ff.1-2.

³⁷ For more details see Ţugui, *Ibidem*, pp. 18-21 and Müller, *Ibidem*, pp. 275-276 and Liviu Pleşa, “Metode represive folosite de Securitate pentru controlul istoricilor clujeni (1945-1965)”, *Intellectualii şi regimul communist*:

attitude adopted by these individuals toward the regime followed the same direction as the one expressed by the following conversation between Dinu Giurescu and his recently released father:

I [Dinu] asked him: “What do we do now?” The Professor [Constatin C.]: “We start working, what else can we do?” Me: “With them [the communist regime]?” Answer: “Yes, with them. Do you want to teach history or not?” Me: “Yes I do!” C.C.G.: “Is there any other way to do it?” Me: “No, there is none.” C.C.G.: “The only way is to work within the existing framework.”³⁸

This wave of semi-rehabilitations generated uneasiness among newly party-promoted historians and weariness within the nomenklatura. Florența Rusu (lecturer on the RWP history at the DPC) complained that “old researchers, not too fond of the government and the party, are allowed in the Academy’s Institute of History, while younger cadres, who are not yet established names in the field, are not engaged in scientific research.”³⁹ A report of the Central Committee’s Section of Science and Culture on the activity within the historical sciences indicated that “there is a certain separation between the historians working at the Academy’s Institute of History and those from the Institute of the RWP Central Committee’s History Institute.” The former consider that the latter produced work of “poor quality, insufficiently researched and unfounded theoretically.” On the other hand, the latter accuse the former of “objectivism, ‘factology’, and insufficient knowledge of Marxism-Leninism.”⁴⁰ The danger of contamination from the “has beens” and from those whose first epistemic socialization was during pre-communist times came not only from historical work subversive to the party view, but also from their ability for proselytism. In other words, they would not educate young cadres for the regime; they would instill to these generations the baggage of former times.

istoriile unei relații. Anuarul Institutului de Investigare a Crimelor Comunismului în România (București: Polirom, 2009), pp. 41-47

³⁸ Dinu C. Giurescu, *Ibidem*, p. 211.

³⁹ “Referat cu privire la munca organizațiilor de partid...”, *Ibidem*, f.10.

⁴⁰ Pavel Țugui, „Informație privind probleme ale activității științifice pe tărâmul istoriei”, 30 ianuarie 1957, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no. 2/1957, f.5. Florin Constantiniu provided a similar taxonomy in his memoirs. See Constantiniu, *Ibidem*, p. 132.

To return to the case of M. Roller, RWP's policy of co-option promoted between 1955 and 1957, encouraged those who wanted to challenge his position of *praktiki* for the historical front. However, this polarization also functioned as means of controlling the scientific field. The "us versus them" dichotomy, one of the features of Stalinist science identified by N. Krementsov, was in fact "a convenient instrument of party control that enhanced the role of the party bureaucracy as 'supreme judge'. It also became a convenient instrument for career building within the rigid academic hierarchy."⁴¹ The challenge against M. Roller was therefore a struggle over the entire discipline and for its institutional base.

What one must emphasize is that Roller was challenged on three directions: from the left, by party historians and apparatus members who believed that he is not doing enough for the development of 'social sciences'; from the (center-)right, by historians who considered him basically incompetent and over-ideological (here there are multiple camps); and, from the top, as he was caught into the power struggles generated by Gheroghiu-Dej's reaffirmation of absolute rule within the RWP. I will not dwell too much on the first group. Their main argument was that Roller did not pursue the complete purge of the historians tainted by the pre-communist academic background or by their 'unhealthy' social origins. Most of those who made these claims were merely behind with the adjustment to the party line. Some of them will simply be dismissed or isolated within the structures of the party schools. Others will ultimately adapt interiorizing the national focus of the historical front.⁴²

⁴¹ Nikolai Krementsov, *Stalinist Science*, p. 255.

⁴² This group formulated its stand particularly during the meetings about the nature of the activity of the Institute of Party History and of the Museum of the People's Revolutionary Struggle. The latter was initially assigned to the Academy, then returned to the Party Institute, then reformed so that it would become a section of the latter and was given the name of Museum of Party History. Another very serious accusation against Roller was that he focused too much on history and disregarded the developing of philosophy, pedagogy, and political economy as Marxist-Leninist social sciences. For example, samples of these arguments can be found in the following documents: „Cu privire la unele măsuri în vederea îmbunătățirii activității Institutului de Istorie a Partidului de pe lângă CC al PMR”,

But what significantly damaged Roller's hegemonic position was a double accusation: he was first considered detrimental to the party's initiative of co-opting non-communist intellectuals (i.e., historians); and second, his methods of management were criticized even at the level of the Department for Agitation and Propaganda, as exemplifying the cult of personality syndrome. A direct consequence of this criticism was Roller's initial demotion within party structures. In March 1955, Roller was released from his position of deputy of the DAP chief. He was then named only deputy director of the RWP Central Committee's Institute of History.⁴³ The same year he lost the position of vice-president of the Academy. At a DAP meeting, in March 1955, Roller was found to have made the following mistakes in his party activity: he did not collaborate constructively with his deputies, heads of DAP's sectors; he did not encourage criticism; he instilled fear in those working for him; he did not trust his colleagues; and, he had no concern for strengthening the patriotism of the masses through agitational and educational work. At the same time, Leonte Răutu considered that Roller's authoritarian style prevented him from properly dealing with "the complexities of the fundamental issues raised by science." To make matters worse, Ghe Apostol, expressing the position of the highest levels of the party leadership, stated that because of his flaws, Roller did not seem to fit the picture of a scientist:

...I know that men of science, researchers are by nature good-hearted, they know how to approach other people, how to talk nicely to them and how to respond warmly to kindness. Scientists are modest, but I did not notice that in the case of comrade Roller. Maybe those who deal with history nowadays are more combative by nature. But whom does history belong to? To the people.⁴⁴

6 septembrie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no. 12/1954, ff. 101-103; "Stenogramă asupra sedinței ținută la Comisia Controlului de Partid cu conducerea Institutului de Istorie al CC al PMR din ziua de 17 septembrie 1954", ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no. 53/1954, ff. 186-212; "Referat privind activitatea Secției de Științe Istorice, Filozofice și Enonomico-Juridice", 27 aprilie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no. 64/1955, ff. 4-6.

⁴³ "Referat în legătură cu despărțirea Secției de propagandă și agitație", 25 februarie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no. 42/1955, f.1.

⁴⁴ "Stenograma ședinței de analiza activității desfășurate de sectoarele știință la care a participat tov. Gheorghe Apostol"..., f. 41.

At a time when his historical work was increasingly criticized for not ignoring the internal conditions of Romania's historical development, the fault of being estranged from the people was a grievous accusation.

With his professional quality being questioned, Roller was next blamed for misrepresenting the interests of the party. The fallacies signaled out during the analysis of his Agitprop tenure found a counterpart in his management of the historical field. A document of the Central Committee's Section for Culture and Science from 1957 stated that at the root of the problems of history-production lay the fact that Roller concentrated in his hands all decision-making "as head of the Central Committee science section, as member the Presidium of the RPR Academy, and as president of the Academy's publishing house." He used voluntaristic and discretionary practices, considering that historical truth had to be adjusted according to the priorities of the day. He did not invest any time in trying to discuss with other historians, to convince them of the importance of the tasks set up by the party. Furthermore, Roller was accused of mechanically implementing Soviet experience in utter disregard of Romanian traditions of higher education. All in all, his methods, along with those of the (by then) former leadership of the Ministry of Education (Tatiana Bulan, Fl. Mezincescu, Alex. Buican), were altogether *antiscientific*⁴⁵ (my emphasis).

Under circumstances of the Central Committee's manifest decision to produce a national history, Roller's failings as historian and 'red expert' were ultimately labeled as detrimental to the party interest. According to another historian-censor, L. Banyai⁴⁶, "many times, in

⁴⁵ „Informație privind situația în domeniul Științelor Istorice”, 24 iunie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no. 7/1957, ff. 25-35.

⁴⁶ L. Banyai was until 1956 the rector of "Bolyai" University in Cluj, then, in the aftermath of the 1956 Hungarian revolution inspired anti-communist and nationalist protests at this higher education institution he was transferred at the History Department in Bucharest. From 1958 until 1967, he was deputy director of the Academy's History

historiography, we witnessed how the party's prestige was abused, how the prestige of Marxism-Leninism was taken advantage of in order for an individual to promote his interests and to pursue ones personal grudges.”⁴⁷ The fact that Roller got entangled in the party struggle of the late 1950s only confirmed his demise. At the July 9-13, 1958 CC Plenum, Leonte Răutu strongly criticized Roller for what were labeled as his anti-party activities. What happened was that Roller became associated with a group led by Constantin Doncea and Ovidiu Șandru who challenged Dej's supremacy in the party. They also claimed to be the true leaders of the 1933 Grivița railway-workers' strike, the defining revolutionary event of Gheorghiu-Dej underground years. Within the larger project of writing a history of the RWP (the second fundamental task of history-production in Romania set by the party's IInd Congress),⁴⁸ Roller began to record on tape these individuals' accounts about the Grivița strikes. According to Răutu, his crucial error was that he allowed Doncea, Șandru, and the others to present their own version of the events: “direct blame falls on comrade Roller. He gave there [at the RWP CC Institute of History] a legitimate location for the rants of Doncea, Șandru, and others. [...] The Institute of History proceeded in a fashion similar to that of a bourgeois institute: everybody came to spew their venom, to satisfy their ambitions.”⁴⁹ Roller was found wanting at his most important task: writing party history in order to provide accounts confirming Gheorghe Gheorghiu Dej's essential role in the allegedly most

Institute in Bucharest. From 1956 until 1968, his role was to set the historiographical line on the modern and contemporary history of the Hungarian minority within that of Romania with an emphasis on party history and that of the working-class movement. Until 1963, he had an important role in imposing party-orthodoxy on issues such as the nature of Romania's participation in the First World War, the role of the bourgeoisie during the 1848 in Transylvania, etc. From 1933 until 1944 he was general secretary of “Madosz” (The Union of the Hungarian Working Class in Romania, after 1944, the Hungarian People's Union), an appendix to the Romanian communist party.

⁴⁷ „Ședința din 13 mai 1957”, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no. 20/1957, f. 51.

⁴⁸ For example, “Plan de elaborare a manualului de istorie a PMR”, 24 mai, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.17/1956, ff. 81-88. The project of a history of the RWP/PCR was never completed under communism in Romania.

⁴⁹ Tudor și Cătănuș, *Amurgul ilegalistilor*, p. 173.

important revolutionary moment in the inter-war history of Romanian communist - the 1933 railway-men's strike. In conclusion, between 1955 and 1958, Roller missed the opportunity of reconfirming his role of *praktiki* both for national and party history.

His hegemony was further challenged in 1956, when the party promoted Paul Niculescu-Mizil and Pavel Țugui at the head of two of the three sections of the newly created Department of Propaganda and Culture.⁵⁰ The DPC was the main Central Committee body that controlled and managed the implementation of the party line at the level of higher-education and scientific research (both of party and non-party affiliation). Between 1945 and 1948, Agitprop responsibilities fell to the Central Section of Political Education, which in 1954 became the Central Committee Section of Propaganda and Agitation. By 1955, the Central Committee aimed at improving the activity of its sections. It thus decided to decrease the number of activists and to encourage their specialization with the purpose of better work within their respective sectors. Therefore, the Department of Propaganda and Agitation was split into two: the Section for Agitation and Propaganda and the Section for Science and Culture. This allowed for higher sectorial control over science and education and it also facilitated a more direct interaction between the party's ideological 'experts' and the epistemic community. By 1956, the Department for Propaganda and Culture (DPC) was created. It was split in three: the Section of Agitation and Propaganda (SAP - its head was P. Niculescu-Mizil until 1965, who also functioned as deputy-chief of the DPC); the Section for Science and Culture (SSC - its head was Pavel Țugui until 1960, replaced by his deputy, V Dinu); and the Section for Schools (its head was Costin

⁵⁰ "Referat în legătură cu organizarea Direcției de propagandă și cultură a CC al PMR" and "Hotărârea nr. 64 a Secretariatului CC al PMR", 25 ianuarie 1956, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no. 64/1956 in Tismaneanu and Vasile, *Ibidem*, pp. 323-327.

Nădejde).⁵¹ This organization of the Agitprop will stay in place until 1965. The SAP was in charge with “the control and implementation of party and government decisions and with the selection of cadres from the Central Committee nomenclatura in areas such as party propaganda, newspapers, publishing houses, political agitation and cultural work for the masses”. The SAP supervised the Higher School of Social Sciences “A. A. Zhdanov”, the Institute for Party History of the Central Committee, the Lenin-Stalin Museum, party magazine *Lupta de clasă*, and it overviewed the implementation of the Central Committee Secretariat in party newspaper *Scînteia*. The SCC “controlled and implemented party and government decisions and the selection of cadres from the Central Committee nomenclatura in areas such as science, education, literature and art.” Among other institutions, under the SCC’s jurisdiction fell the Ministry of Education, of Culture, and the Academy. Within SCC there were two sectors with significant impact on the historical front: the Sector of Social Sciences (in charge with the Academy’s Section of historical sciences, philosophy, law, and economy and its Section of philology, literature, and art, along with all the research institutes and publications that are subordinated to these two sections); and, the Sector of Higher Education (which controlled the General Direction of Higher Education, the Direction for the Teaching of Social Sciences that belonged to the Ministry of Education).⁵²

As the institutional structure presented above clearly shows, Roller’s demotion in 1955 from the position of deputy-chief of the Section of Propaganda and Agitation, where he basically

⁵¹ Nicoleta Ionescu-Gură, *Nomenclatura Comitetului Central al Partidului Muncitoresc Român* (București: Humanitas, 2006), pp. 19-25. Also see Cristian Vasile, “Împunerea controlului communist asupra culturii, 1948-1953. Aspecte instituționale”, pp. 25-43 in *Arhivele Securității*, vol. II (București: Nemira, 2006) and Cristian Vasile, “Propaganda and Culture in Romania at the Beginning of the Communist regime” in Vladimir Tismaneanu (ed.), *Stalinism Revisited. The Establishment of Communist Regimes in East-Central Europe* (Budapest/New York: Central European Press, 2009), pp. 367-385.

⁵² „Regulamentul de funcționare al Secției de Știință și Cultură a C.C. al P.M.R”, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no. 59/1955, ff. 7-11 and „Regulamentul de funcționare al Secției de agitație și propagandă a CC al PMR”, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no. 62/1955, ff. 1-3.

was responsible only to Leonte Răutu, radically lowered his leverage over decision making on the historical front. Moreover, his nomination as only vice-president of the Institute for Party History subordinated him also to Constantin Pârvulescu, the director of this institution until 1958. Both Niculescu-Mizil and P. Țugui were representatives of the new party line focused on greater domestic consolidation through the application of creative Marxism-Leninism to a specific national context. In contrast to Roller, their decision-making strategies will open institutional and thematic areas of negotiation for the up-and-coming historians eager to take advantage of the historical front's shifting priorities. A third character to the story of new party watchdogs over history-production upon Roller's demise is Miron Constantinescu central figure to the history of Romanian communism. Among other important positions in the party-state apparatus, Constantinescu was, for almost a year, Minister of Education. Before that he was, until 1955, head of the State Planning Committee, and until 1957 vice-president of the Council of Ministers. By the beginning of 1958, along with Iosif Chișinevschi, Miron Constantinescu became the most important character in the push for de-Stalinization in Romania. Upon his defeat by Gheorghiu-Dej, he lost all his leadership positions in the party. By 1958, he was appointed director (and then deputy-director) of the Party History Institute (until 1962). From 1962 until 1965 he was head of the modern history section of the Academy's History Institute in Bucharest.⁵³ Throughout this time, Constantinescu maintained direct access to Gheorghiu-Dej. His analyses of the volumes of the national history treatise or of various monographs (especially those concerning the history of Transylvania) are directly addressed to the RWP general secretary. Constantinescu, Mizil, and Țugui presided over the reorganization of the system of

⁵³ Vladimir Tismaneanu, "Miron Constantinescu sau povestea imposibilei erezii", pp. 243-249 in *Arheologia Terorii*, ed. III (București: Curtea Veche, 2008) and Ștefan Bosomitu, "Miron Constantinescu – Profilul intelectualului angajat", pp. 167-194 in *Intelectualii și regimul communist...*

planned science in Romania, being directly involved in linking history-production to the increasingly nationally orientated program of the RWP. In different ways, according to their responsibilities between 1956 and 1963, they reached a community of interests with those historians self-defined as national, professional, and anti-Roller.⁵⁴ It ultimately resulted in a change of academic regime, despite pressures from other quarters of the party more concerned with vigilance, purity, and ‘democratization’ of higher education.

C. A Polycentric Historical Front

Roller’s hegemony withered both in terms of loss of party-state positions and of prestige. His demise in the end was the result of being rejected as authority on the historical front. Nevertheless, it should be noted that his decline was not sudden and definitely not complete. During the three years (he died in 1958) since the first contestations of his role within the historical front, Roller did maintain an important say in the first discussions about the drafting of the national history treatise.⁵⁵ At the same time, his countermoves against his adversaries will become a model for other historians who did not agree to the transformation of the status-quo in the discipline.⁵⁶ But the pressure against him built up, for he was attacked basically from all quarters. Roller’s position was weakened to the extent that by 1957, the historians working at the

⁵⁴ This community of interests however had a negative impact on the long term, for it transformed the historical field into a “golden cage” unable to reform from within and therefore to challenge the regime’s principle of one-history, one-truth, one-science. See Loren R. Graham, “How Willing Are Scientists to Reform Their Own Institutions,” pp. 255-274 in David-Fox and Péteri, *Ibidem*.

⁵⁵ In 1957, Roller was nominated among the four editors in chief of the national history treatise (Along P. Constantinescu-Iași, C. Daicoviciu, and A. Oțetea). His responsibility was the writing of the fourth volume on modern history (in the end it dealt only with the timeframe 1848-1878). See Pavel Țuguî, „Informație privind probleme ale activității științifice pe tărâmul istoriei”, 30 ianuarie 1957, *Ibidem*, f. 11.

⁵⁶ Some of the articles published in the anniversary issue of *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, “1947-1962, Writing Romania’s History during the Years of Popular Democracy (nr. 6, an XV, 1962), still mention his high-school textbook of history as a beacon of Marxist-Leninist historiography. The authors of these articles reinforce some of Roller’s most lasting opinions on national history: the revolutionary character of the domestic situation in Romania between 1917 and 1920, the deep crisis of the ‘bourgeois-landowning’ regime at the eve of the First World War, and Romania’s participation to the latter as a form of imperialism. Only starting with mid 1960s this narrative changed.

third and fourth volumes of the treatise of national history simply refused to work with him.⁵⁷ To paraphrase Andrei Oțetea, the RWP Second Congress found the historical front in a transitional phase, as those who survived (physically and professionally) the purges of the late 1940s and early 1950s achieved greater integration. This took place in the context of ideological change at the civilizational center, the USSR. The profession and the discipline entered a new phase once these tendencies met with the party's 'developmental tasks'. It was time, according to C. Daicoviciu's recollection, to "quietly but radically right the mistakes of the past" and not only to see who was responsible for but also how history-production was dragged into such blind alleys.⁵⁸

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the first step in the transformation of the historical front was Pavel Țugui's request to a group of historians from the Academy's Institute of History to write a report on the state of the profession. Its main authors were Andrei Oțetea, Constantin Daicoviciu, and Barbu Cămpina. Among other things, it stated that "we must stress an issue which we consider a blow against one of the most sacred rights of a people, its name. Comrade Roller tried to steal even this from us." Roller's reply to the document (*Unele observații pe text*) articulated some of the most important criticisms against the developments within the historical field from 1955 to 1962. Despite the disappearance of their author, the themes will consistently re-appear in the internal documents of the DPC. Roller argued that young historians fell under the spell of bourgeois ideology and therefore valuable cadres refused to assert themselves within the historiographical debate. The remedy he proposed was the strengthening of the party

⁵⁷ „Stenograma discuțiilor în ședința de analiză muncii sectoarelor Artă, Științele Naturii și Științele Sociale, care a avut loc în zilele de 15 și 18 noiembrie 1957”, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.31/1957, f. 14. At the same time, Roller initially refused to allow to any historian from the Academy's Institutes to work in the collective for the fourth volume, drawing even the DPC's ire. See „Munca de partid în institutele de științe sociale”, 23 februarie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.13/1957, ff. 3-9.

⁵⁸ Both quotations are from „Ședința din 10 mai 1957”, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no. 20/1957, f. 5 and f. 8.

organizations of the Academy's institutes, the implementation of the party-line by the institutes' party members, and the strengthening, through competent and faithful individuals, of the Central Committee's control over the errors made by historians.⁵⁹ Between 1957 and 1959, these principles will represent a significant counterbalance to the advancement of the anti-Roller camp. As we shall see, in the change in the structure of the epistemic community was not a one way street. The RWP leadership, through the DPC and the Ministry of Education, viewed 'historical science' as part and parcel of the party's ideological struggle. In the words of P. Țugui, "our patience and understanding must not be confused with unprincipled concessions; this [tendency] must be confronted."⁶⁰ No brake in the ideological struggle was allowed. The only true scientific method was that of historical materialism. The purpose of co-option was only that of strengthening the building of socialism.⁶¹ For the moment however, I am merely trying to map out the shifts at the very top of the historical front's institutional structure. Only after the identification of the main actors in this transformation, I will discuss, in the following chapters, the systemic overhaul undergone by history-production from 1956 until 1963.

The next phase in this conflict was the change in the hierarchy of the Academy's Institute of History. A Commission was created which main task was to analyze this institute's activity. Its members were P. Constatinescu-Iași (president), V. Malinschi (as representative of the Academy's Presidium), Emil Condurachi, C. Daicoviciu, A. Oțetea, and M. Roller. Between

⁵⁹ Țugui published the whole text of this report in *Istoria și limba română*.... He also provided a full account of the events (trying of course to put himself in the best light possible). Besides the three authors mentioned, the document was presented also to Gheorghe Haupt, Emil Condurachi, Vasile Maciu, and David Prodan. Because of various reasons (mostly rooted in the fact that they extensively worked Roller in previous years), they all refused to sign, offering only verbal approval of the text.

⁶⁰ „Minuta ședinței din 4 noiembrie a Secției de Știință și Cultură”, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no. 20/1957, ff. 144-148.

⁶¹ Miron Constantinescu „Rolul intelectualilor în construirea socialismului în RPR”, articol cerut de ziarul *Jenminjibao*, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.1/1957, ff. 1-21. For an extensive discussion of Constantinescu's article see Ștefan Bosomitu, "Miron Constantinescu – Profilul intelectualului angajat", *Ibidem*.

1955 and February 1956 it met eight times. The Commission decided the reorganization of the institute; the introduction of work-norms for an improved evaluation of scientific research; the revival of the tradition of in-house conferences; the reorganization of the cadres (e.g., the junior researchers were to be attached to senior scholars); the assessment of past abuses in personnel policies; the improvement of the activity of the Institute's periodical, *Studii*; the improvement of the system of research material provision (particularly non-Soviet foreign language literature); and, the change of the board. A. Oțetea was nominated to replace V. Chereșteșiu as director of the institute. The chair of the medieval history section was Barbu Cămpina; of modern history Gheorghe Haupt, who provisionally was named also chair of the newly created section of contemporary history; and, of the section of Romanian-Russian relations, I. Gheorghiu.⁶²

This reform of the Academy's Institute of History officialized the ascendance of the anti-Roller report signatories. It allowed each of them to consolidate dominance over their respective subfields. But, despite the appearance of a common front, the relationships among the three were far from friendly. First, Barbu Cămpina managed to create a bit of a following, especially among young, post-1948 historians. His methods that combined history with sociology were appealing for the new generation, particularly because he formulated them in sharp distinction from 'bourgeois historians' (N. Iorga, Ghe. Brătianu, or C. C. Giurescu). His harshest words against

⁶² Two observations should be made to this event. On the one hand, in his struggle to preserve his influence (Chereșteșiu was after all his protégée), Roller found himself in absolute minority. Malinschi was representing T. Săvulescu, who had already crossed swords with Roller. The latter also managed to antagonize Constantinescu-Iași. DAP documents from 1954 and 1955 refer to a conflict between the two historian-ideologues. It seems that Roller strongly criticized Constantinescu-Iași' volume *Relații române-ruse din trecut* (1954), endangering the book's publication at the Academy's Publishing House. See A. Vianu's statement in "Stenogramă luată în ziua de 17 noiembrie 1954...", *Ibidem*, f. 21. What he did succeed was to accentuate the conflict between Dacoviciu and Oțetea. See "Referat privind analiza activității Institutului de Istorie din București", 19 aprilie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no. 9/1956. In 1957, P. Țugui contended that the unstable and ideologically 'dangerous' situation in 1955-1956 was also caused by the inability of Constantinescu-Iași and Roller to work together in order to reform the discipline and its structure according to the new party agenda. The power struggle between the two historian-censors allowed Oțetea, Dacoviciu, and Cămpina to bring about a new order within the academic community and research structure. See „Ședința din 13 mai 1957”, *Ibidem*, ff. 78-79.

these individuals came on matters related to their analysis of “feudalism”, a concept rarely employed before 1945, but a central element of Marxist historiography. He did provide interesting insights on an alternative interpretation of the Middle Ages based on social forces and their relationship with state-building and economic development. Cămpina believed to have made a breakthrough in the analysis of this historical epoch; “bourgeois historiography has literally been incapable of understanding the medieval political mechanism. It could not envisage any other form of state...than the bourgeois one, the only one that allowed for the fulfillment of administrative centralization.”⁶³

Nevertheless, despite mostly negative characterizations of Cămpina’s activity from the memoirs literature, his interventions during the meetings with DPC representatives paint a more nuanced picture. Most of the statements in his dealings with party representatives focus on imposing ‘method’ to the writing of modern history. For example, in 1957, Cămpina considered that “contemporary historiography about the 1848 generation was mainly based on legends and not on real, scientific monographical efforts.” Moreover, he advocated “the evaluation of personalities in concrete historical situations”, rather than to simply issue accusations against a subject on the basis of its inadequacy to the present political situation. At the same time, Cămpina cautioned that the practices of the historical front in the first years of popular democracy did not instill the urgency “to critically and scientifically approach documents in order to avoid the trap of voluntarism.” In direct reference to Roller, he remarked that younger historians are not willing to courageously attack dogmatism because of the fear of administrative consequences. As we shall see in the debates surrounding Romania’s main historical journal, *Studii*, or in the thematic discussions related to *Istoria României*, Cămpina was not voicing mere

⁶³ *Apud* Constantiniu, *De la Roller la Răutu*, p. 56.

personal opinions. His stand was in similar tone and focus as those of other historians, such as A. Oțetea, C. Daicoviciu, or E. Condurachi.⁶⁴

B. Cămpina's approach was perceived as an alternative to existing historiography, despite the fact that he based a lot of his insights on the work of a foremost Slavist, P.P. Panaitescu.⁶⁵ The latter, despite his rocky early experience under communism, would gradually be reintegrated and even acquired enough recognition on the historical front in order to become author of chapters in the third volume of *Istoria României*.⁶⁶ Barbu Cămpina's legacy, after his untimely death in 1958, lay in the influence that he exerted over three historians who would become highly influential from early sixties onwards. The first one was M. Berza, a central figure in the re-founding of the Institute for South-East European Studies and one of the most important proponents of the writing of universal history and of methodological imports from abroad. He was however split between this allegiance and his attachment to N. Iorga's historical method (whose assistant he was in the later 1930s). The second was Ștefan Ștefănescu, a historian with graduate education at the Lomonosov University of Moscow, who will later become head of the Academy's History Institute in Bucharest, dean of the History Department at Bucharest University, full member of the Academy, and crucial actor on the historical front starting with early sixties well into the 1980s.⁶⁷ The third historian, and the one maybe most directly linked to

⁶⁴ „Ședința din 10 mai 1957”, *Ibidem*, ff. 22-28.

⁶⁵ See *Opriș, Ibidem*, vol. I, pp. 519 and Constantiniu, *Ibidem*, pp. 55-60 and 98-103.

⁶⁶ What it should be noted is that Barbu Cămpina did protect P. P. Panaitescu during the purges of the historical front in 1957 and 1958. At the same time, it is not a coincidence that the full reintegration of Panaitescu came in 1959-1962, immediately after the death of Cămpina. Panaitescu successfully found a way back to prominence, among other things, through the translation, publication, and commentary of the 17th century Moldavian chronicles, which the regime considered as the most important expression of Romanian late medieval political ideology. See for example Dan Simionescu review of P. P. Panaitescu 1958 edition of Miron Constantin *Opere* in *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 4, an XIII, 1960, pp. 209-214. I will return to Panaitescu in my analysis of the epistemic debates linked to the national history treatise.

⁶⁷ See his biography from 1965, upon Ștefănescu's nomination as instructor for the Agitprop's Section for Science and Art. “Ștefan Ștefănescu – material suplimentar”, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație,

Câmpina, was his successor as the head of medieval history at the Bucharest History Institute, namely Damaschin Mioc. He was the one who finalized, along with M Berza, Câmpina's chapters in the second volume of *Istoria României*.

Gheorghe Haupt was another great hope of the historiography of a new type in second half of the 1950s. His role on the historical front was however short lived, for he decided to immigrate to France in 1958. Haupt was *l'enfant terrible* of Marxist historiography in Romania. He was a graduate of the Leningrad University and promised to re-define the field of the history of the working-class.⁶⁸ From his position of head of contemporary history section and deputy editor of *Studii*, Haupt soon came into conflict with DPC representatives. Rather than encouraging the writing of articles that simply confirmed to the party line, Haupt believed that "subjects must be researched in order to avoid results based on aprioric ideas." He was immediately rebuked by L. Răutu, who wondered how was it possible for anti-party views on modern and contemporary history and on classics of Marxism-Leninism to be expressed in the articles from *Studii* without any consequence. Haupt's fast rise within the epistemic community did not equal to a change of the premises governing the latter. He, along with other historians who were party members, such as M. Ionescu, N Fotino, or V Maciu, wanted to find a new synthesis between historical materialism and history-writing. These individuals' opposition to

no.110/1965, ff. 1-18. For Ștefănescu's relationship with Barbu Câmpina see Apostol Stan, *Istorie și politică în România comunistă* (București: Curtea Veche, 2010), pp. 132-138.

⁶⁸ One of the reasons behind his emigration might have been the nationalist overtones apparent in Romanian communism in the second half of the 1950s. Haupt was an Auschwitz survivor and, most likely, with the memory of the Slansky trial and the Pauker purge fresh in his mind, he preferred to take no risks. He arrived in Paris in 1958 and established himself as one of the most important European specialists in labor history and in the study of socialist movements. Upon his death, *Cahiers de Monde russe et soviétique* and *Le Mouvement Social* dedicated entire issues to him ("Hommage à Georges Haupt," Vol. 19, No. 3, Jul. - Sep., 1978 and "Numéro spécial: Georges Haupt", no. 111, April-July 1980). *Theory and Society*, *International Labor and Working-Class History*, and *The New German Critique* also published obituaries.

Roller epitomized such a drive. Their criticism though will expose them to accusations of anti-party activities. They rose against an old hierarchy, but miscalculated the weight of administrative control over the discipline. To paraphrase Haupt, epistemic authority could not simply replace that of the apparatus.⁶⁹

The second direction of conflict was that between Oțetea and Roller's protégées. Florin Constantiniu described in detail how people such as Aurel Roman (who was released from the position of deputy director of the Academy's Institute of History), Eugen Stănescu, or I. R. Neacșu were either pushed to the fringes of the historical front or forced to re-invent their position within it. Between 1955 and 1957, A. Oțetea attempted to use his leadership position both at the Academy and in the editorial board of *Studii* (which he headed) in order to transform the epistemic community. In a rather unilateral account of his actions, one author states that Oțetea attacked "anyone who was appointed by the Soviet occupier to rule Romanian historiography or who did not renounce the Soviet school."⁷⁰ He also created his own fief: he brought in young historians such as Șerban Papacostea, Florin Constantiniu, or Dan Berindei and surrounded himself with friends M. Berza, Eliza Campus, Cornelia Bodea, or Radu Vulpe. He was one of the main forces behind the re-institutionalization of the historians recently released from prison, while also pushing for the establishment of a culture of founding fathers for

⁶⁹ „Ședința din 10 mai 1957”, *Ibidem*, ff. 29-32. With less than a year before he left Romania for good, Haupt wrote in, an article about Romanian Marxist Dobrogeanu-Gherea, a shockingly scanting characterization of late 19th century Russia. During the high time of Aesopian language under communism in Romania, Haupt's words seem to express a deeper disenchantment of the author than merely a Pokrosvkian type of characterization of pre-Bolshevik Russia. Haupt wrote: “[Gherea] was born in the country of starving millions, in a kingdom of darkness, in a place where not only freedom but also its utterance were banned. It was a country where speech was shackled and free-thought was punished, where not only all fundamental values were trampled but human dignity as well.” See Gh. Haupt, „Începutul activității revoluționare a lui C. Dobrogeanu-Gherea”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 3, an X, 1957, p. 64. This article itself might have been one of those anti-party manifestations of which Răutu made reference. In it, Haupt goes to great lengths to prove Gherea's revolutionary youth. This view of the Romanian Marxist contradicted the official party line that painted Gherea as an opportunist who prevented the development of a revolutionary movement at end of 19th century and beginning of 20th in Romania.

⁷⁰ Constantiniu, *Ibidem*, pp. 187.

Romanian historical sciences.⁷¹ At a time when *Voprosy Istorii* published lead articles advocating for the critical recuperation of pre-communist historiographical traditions⁷², Oțetea contrasted *rollerism* with the legacies of the so-called Romanian ‘critical school’ of history-writing (I. Bogdan, D. Onciul, N. Iorga). In a sense his initiatives would resonate with the principle formulated by Iorga: “after a time of revelations and initiatives, there comes a time for construction.”⁷³

However, one must not label the gradual reconsideration of pre-communist historians and their work (others were B. P. Hașdeu, A. D. Xenopol, and V. Pârvan) as merely the return of a repressed past. A. Oțetea, first, and later others, rather followed the party’s call for reinventing tradition on the historical front. An editorial article in *Studii* from 1956 entitled “The Tasks of Great Responsibility Put Forward by the Second Party Congress” argued that “in the process of writing Romania’s history we must capitalize on everything that was positive in the works of historians from the past.” But the line was a thin one, for historians had to be vigilant to “the retrograde character of past theories and to the influence of the ideology of exploiting classes.” Voicing concerns from DPC quarters and of historian-censors (P. Constantinescu-Iași or V. Liveanu), the same article warned that “earlier mistakes with a view to the contribution of historians from the past, do not justify the weakening of the struggle against their mistakes.”⁷⁴ The basic idea, though, was that a synthesis needed to be achieved, as historical materialism had

⁷¹ Oțetea’s role could be compared to that of non-party medievalist Tadeusz Manteuffel, who was appointed, in 1951, president of the newly created Institute of History at the Polish Academy of Sciences. The main idea behind both men’s activity was “limiting the damage of the totalitarian state.” See John Connolly, *Captive Universities...*, p. 155.

⁷² One of them translated and published as lead article in *Studii*: „Studiul istoriei științei istorice”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 2-3, an 9, pp. 7-17 [articol de fond in „Voprosi istorii, nr 1, 1956”].

⁷³ About the “critical school” of historiography see Pompiliu Teodor, *Evoluția gândirii istorice românești* (Cluj: Editura Dacia, 1970), Lucian Boia, *Evoluția istoriografiei române. Partea I. De la origini la începutul secolului al XX-lea* (București: Universitatea din București, Facultatea de Istorie, 1975), Al Zub, *De la istoria critică la criticism* (București: Editura Academiei RSR, 1985).

⁷⁴ “Sarcinile de mare răspundere...”, p. 11-12.

to situate itself as the pinnacle of history writing in the country, organically fulfilling old scientific desiderata and renouncing the blind alleys of bourgeois historical studies. This agenda fit A. Oțetea's idea about history-writing that he sketched in his works in late 1930s and early 1940s. In a conference held at N. Iorga's Institute of Universal History in 1938, Oțetea advocated that

historical materialism expanded knowledge about life and history [...] Historical materialism taught us that institutions are the product of evolution, not absolute categories; it pointed out the real strength of the state as institution safeguarding the interests of the ruling classes; and, it indicated to historians to search for the explanation of political events beyond the surface of things, in the nature of the modes of production. Historical materialism has shown the dependence of ideologies on class interests and it explained the overlapped between great historical eras with periods of accelerated economic growth. Because of all this, historical materialism widened the horizon of historical research and of history as a concept.⁷⁵

In conclusion, it can be argued that Oțetea rise to prominence within the historical front benefited from an overlap between his own views on history writing and the priorities set up by the party for history-production. The epistemic community in Romania synchronized to the transformations undergone by history as science under the impact of de-Stalinization in the Soviet Union, as the latter was partially emulated by domestic communist decision-makers. And such adjustments were in their turn worked through by A. Oțetea with the purpose of re-defining the discipline.

The fundamental premise upon which Oțetea founded his offensive against Roller was that the profession was split in two champs: 'professional' vs. 'party' historians.⁷⁶ This interpretation was strengthened by the fact that the Second Congress, by simultaneously instructing for the writing of two mega-monographs, of the RWP and of Romania, basically separated between the

⁷⁵ A. Oțetea, "Conceptia materialista a istoriei ca metoda de cercetare si de expunere", in Steliu Lambru (coord.), *Gandirea marxista in Romania precomunista: O antologie* (Bucuresti: Domino, 2006), p. 166. For A. Oțetea's activity during the interwar period see Al. Zub, *Istorie si istorici în România interbelică* (Iasi: Editura Junimea, 1989). The importance of the quoted article is enhanced by the fact that Oțetea will repeat many of its main tenets in articles expounding the method and practice of history-production under communism.

⁷⁶ „Informație privind probleme ale activității științifice pe tărâmul istoriei”, *Ibidem*.

history of the party and that of the country. Moreover, the dual system of research structures dealing with party-history research and education and those of the Academy that focused on national history encouraged a polarized definition of the historical front. Furthermore, Oțetea's description was reinforced by the inability of the Institute for Party History to provide significant historiographical results at a time when the Academy's institutions began to gradually produce national syntheses.

In the second half of the 1950s, the party-history milieu experienced a transitional phase as well. The crux of the problem here was that change in this section of the historical front became synonymous with purge. If historians from the Academy structures benefited from the leverage provided by interpretation of issues specific to the profession and specialization, those writing the about the party had no leverage because their production *made up* RWP's identity. The internal turbulences among party ranks and leadership during Gheorghiu-Dej's repositioning in the context of de-Stalinization, brought back the specter of factionalism. Therefore, this sector experienced successive makeovers both at the institutional level and at that of personnel. In 1954, the "Ștefan Gheroghiu" Party School merged with the Higher School of Social Sciences „A. A. Zhdanov". Party higher education lasted only 3 years. Until 1963, however, the graduates had to pass a set of supplementary exams in order to have their diplomas recognized. At the same time, the Institute of History of the RWP's Central Committee was going through its own growth pains: in the 1950s, its researchers had very limited access to the Central Committee's Archives; the institute struggled to integrate the Museum of the People's Revolutionary Struggle (from 1954 the Museum of RWP History) headed by Clara Cușnir-Mihailovici; it also failed to establish a research-based relationship with the "Ștefan Gheorghiu" Party School. Moreover, in 1958, the director of the Institute, Constantin Pârvulescu, was purged because of his association

with the Constantinescu-Chișinevschi faction. As we have seen earlier, with Roller's demise (vice-president of the Institute), the Institute itself was the focus of an anti-factionalism campaign.⁷⁷ Only in the second half of the 1960s, does the Party Institute begin to assert itself on the historical front. Moreover, besides the stillborn project of the Treatise of RWP's history, the field of party and working-class movement history experienced another resounding failure: the inability to finalize volume V of *Istoria României* (dealing with contemporary history).

In all fairness, party history production did manage to generate a coherent image of Romanian communists consistently following the path to socialist revolution with the purpose of founding popular democracy. It managed to establish a genealogy of working-class struggle. It successfully set up landmark moments that legitimized RWP leadership (the 1918-1920 revolutionary years, the 1933 railway workers' strikes, August 23, 1944 insurrection). But its most important pitfall was the fact that "research on the working-class movement published up to now [1962] succeeded only to a small degree to analyze topics about the working-class movement *within* the big-picture of the entire history of our country."⁷⁸ In other words,

⁷⁷ See Vladimir Tismaneanu, "Școlile de partid ca formă de îndoctrinare comunistă" and "Academia Ștefan Gheorghiu și formele corupției ideologice", pp. 150-166, *Arheologia...*; Nicoleta Ionescu-Gură, "Studiu Introductiv" in Florica Dobre (coord.), *Membri CC al PCR, 1945-1989. Dicționar* (București: Editura Enciclopedică, 2004), pp. 39-40 and pp. 48-52; Nicoleta Ionescu-Gură, *Nomenclatura Comitetului Central*; Mihai Dinu Georghiu, *Intelectuali în câmpul puterii. Morfologii și traiectorii sociale* (București: Polirom, 2007), pp. 92-97; Mihăiță Lupu, "Funcționarea Academiei 'Ștefan Gheorghiu' sau ce putem recupera în folosul mobilității elitelor actuale din România" in *Elite comuniste înainte și după 1989*. Anuarul Institutului de Investigare a Crimelor Comunismului din România, vol. II (București: Polirom, 2007), pp. 265-279.

⁷⁸ N. Lupu, "Perioada crizei economice mondiale a capitalismului", *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, [1947-1962 Cercetarea Istoriei României în anii Puterii Populare] 6, an XV, 1962, p. 1721. In the same anniversary issue of *Studii* (entitled The Study of Romania's History during the Years of Popular Power), Tr. Udrea explained the limited development of historical research of the August 23 'insurrection' on the basis of two sets of factors: subjective and objective ones. The second were mainly related to the developing of the research infrastructure that could facilitate the studying of the subject in question. But the first consist of the "malicious activity on the ideological front pursued by the factionalist anti-party group of Pauker-Luca, seconded by Teohari Georgescu actively helped by Iosif Chișinevschi and Miron Constantinescu." See Tr. Udrea, „Insurecția armată de la 23 august 1944. Lupta pentru instaurarea guvernului democratic”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, [1947-1962 Cercetarea Istoriei României în anii Puterii Populare] 6, an XV, 1962, pp. 1735-1736. This evaluation, despite the fact that it comes from a historian affiliated contemporary history sector of the Academy's History Institute in Bucharest, excellently exemplifies how

vindicating the dichotomy developed in 1955 by Roller's challengers, particularly Oțetea, party-history during Gheorghiu-Dej's regime was not yet a segment of the national narrative, but rather it constituted a separate chapter.

Returning to the initial binary formulation, one needs to add that 'party' historians were not always those writing party or working-class movement history. The whole meaning of this formula lay in the sense that these individuals represented the sector of the profession that fulfilled unwaveringly party directives. It should be apparent by now, and clearer later, that such criterion hardly was one to justify a clear cut separation, a two-camp theory, within the historical front. Nevertheless, the position of 'party historians' was subverted particularly because of their association with the failings of the above described fields. To take the point further, with Roller influence rapidly waning in the face of both party and epistemic criticism, this group became associated to the latter's already rebuked and discarded practices. So, in a sense, Oțetea's offensive on the historical front relied both on a real positioning within the discipline and on a metaphor. This allowed him greater flexibility in attacking his adversaries. In the process, however, the complexity of the professional milieu was blurred.

The thrust of Oțetea's attack against Roller was the focus on his errors of methodology in the selection, translation, and editing the volumes of *Documente privind istoria României*, which at the time, along with Roller's textbook, were considered the apex of Marxist-Leninist historiography in Romania. The overlying theme of Oțetea's criticism was that these projects along with the general activity in the field of historical studies showed a blatant lack of scientific quality, of knowledge of the basic methods in the profession. Such dilettantism was coupled with instilling terror and fear among the historians' community. Oțetea also argued that there was an

the leadership turmoil practically brought party-history to a standstill (at least until the Third Party Congress in June 1960).

artificial segregation between old historians (tainted by their pre-communist first professional socialization) and the young ones (cadres of the new regime). Such divisions and divisive attitudes ultimately were running counter to the party's call for a collective, concentrated, monographic effort from the historical front. Moreover, according to Oțetea, Roller's role in the profession was not only detrimental to the interests of the party in terms of production but also in what concerned the personnel, the new generations. His inability to show exemplary craft in the application of historical materialism had an impact on the understanding of the up and coming cadres about what was the true nature of the scientific method in history under Marxism-Leninism.⁷⁹ As we can see, Oțetea not only denied Roller's professional and administrative ability, but he also significantly questioned his quality as *pratiki*, that is of implementing party orthodoxy within the historical front.

Upon acceding to the top position on the historical front, starting with 1957, Oțetea was treated to the same medicine as the one he used to gradually neutralize Roller. In other words, the DPC and some of the historians whom he antagonized on his way up to power within the profession began accusing him of merely replacing one personalism with another. Leonte Răutu bluntly formulated this critique: "before, there was comrade Roller's monopoly, now is comrade Oțetea's. We are against the idea of monopoly over science."⁸⁰ Solomon Știrbu, one of Oțetea's archenemies,⁸¹ formulated his challenge in similar terms. He contended that "there should be a

⁷⁹ See A. Oțetea's speech during the official session of presentation of the new management of the Academy's Institute of History in Bucharest. One needs to add the fact that Oțetea contrasted the faulty practices used to edit the volume of documents of national history with the model set up by pre-communist historians such as Ion Bogdan și Mihai Costăchescu. Besides the phenomenon of re-invention of tradition, another reason behind this comparison was that of showing that despite claims to the contrary, under Roller progress in the profession was questionable. See "Din viața Institutului de Istorie al Academei RPR din București", *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 5, an IX, 1956, pp. 131-133.

⁸⁰ „Ședința din 13 mai 1957”, *Ibidem*, f. 84.

⁸¹ Oțetea and Știrbu were engaged and a vitriolic polemic about the nature, causes and interpretation of the 1821 revolt of Tudor Vladimirescu. On the one hand, Oțetea's criticism against the dilettantism of Știrbu's volume helped

correct distribution of labor force at the work-place. But this is not so and it has a negative impact on the promotion of young or relatively younger cadres on the historical front.”⁸² Indeed Oțetea not only marginalized Roller but he also acquired multiple central positions along the way, besides that of director of the Academy’s History Institute in Bucharest and full member of the Academy. He was also professor at the University C. I. Parhon, head of *Studii*’s editorial board, chief editor of volume III of the national history treatise. In contrast to Roller’s fate, rather than falling out of favor, Oțetea was forced by DPC maneuvering and decisions, to share decision-making responsibilities on the historical front.

The solution for finding a new balance in the context of the collapsing academic regime based on the “the reign of a great dictator scientist”⁸³ was to bring another power-holder into the picture. The new player in the game of party control and history-writing was C. Daicoviciu. The literature about the first decades of the communist period analyzed in this chapter provides, to a certain extent, a damning description of Daicoviciu’s character. The blueprint account of his activity was provided by D. Prodan, who was clearly influenced by the power struggles at the Academy’s Institute of History in Cluj and from the History Department of Babeș University. Also, Aurel Decei famously described Daicoviciu as “the Chameleon”. He situated himself pragmatically, in between Oțetea and Roller (and later the DPC), always careful not to deviate

set a standard of how Whiggish history could be employed in the fifties under communism in Romania. On the other hand, though, the intensity of Oțetea’s attack on a historian who was one of the foremost representatives of the new, Marxist-Leninist historiography triggered a backlash against him from DPC’s part. Basically he went too far, for his dismantling of Știrbu was ultimately perceived as an overt contestation of the party’s role in history-production. The evolution of *Studii*’s editorial board and the debates surrounding its activity will be directly linked to the Oțetea-Știrbu face-off. For summaries of the debate see, among other contributions, Florin Müller, *Ibidem*, pp. 231-236, Florin Constantiniu, *Ibidem*, pp. 153-156. For the exchange and the reaction from both the Academy’s Institute of History in Bucharest and the Institute for Party History see from *Studii. Revistă de istorie* issues 2,3, and 4, an X, 1957.

⁸² Ședința din 13 mai 1957”, *Ibidem*, f. 48.

⁸³ The first president of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, V. I. Vernadsky, proclaimed in his diary in 1931 that “the future, and evidently, power within it will belong to the people of science....The time of science is before us – the reign of great dictator-scientists.” See Michael David-Fox and György Péteri, “On the Origins and Demise of the Communist Academic Regime”, David-Fox and Péteri, *Ibidem*, p.18,

too much from the party-line. C. Daicoviciu was the DPC's proposal for "strengthening the Academy's Historical Section's leadership."⁸⁴ In 1957, he was nominated to replace P. Constantinescu-Iași at the head of the Section on grounds that the latter "does not have enough prestige among its members and he is not competent enough to intervene on controversial ideological subjects." The same DPC report added that "leadership positions on the historical front are held by only a limited number of specialists and therefore one individual can cumulate many responsibilities [...] Such a situation can lead to a monopoly of science, to the development of sectarianism that favors personalistic management, a phenomenon criticized in the past."⁸⁵ This decision was not implemented immediately. Daicoviciu will become the head of the Academy's Section of history, philology, literature and arts only in 1959.

Daicoviciu successfully created, however, with the help of Emil Petrovici (the rector of the Babeș University, another high-profile "comrade-scientist"), his own fiefdom in Cluj. He used this power base in order to counter hegemonic tendencies of the Academy's History Institute in Bucharest (i.e., Oțetea). One report of the regional party committee in Cluj, remarked that "in many cases the scientific agenda is dictated from the center with no prior discussions with either the Academy's regional branch or with the regional party leadership. This prevents scientific production to be adjusted to the specific needs of this area of the country."⁸⁶ Indeed, Daicoviciu successfully attained near monopoly (his only challenge came from David Prodan, who was specialized on the Transylvania peasant movement of 1784 and on the beginning of Romanians' political emancipation in this region) over the writing of Transylvanian history. Daicoviciu

⁸⁴ "Acțiuni întreprinse de direcție, secție și sector în anul 1959", 14 decembrie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no. 29/1959, f. 130.

⁸⁵ „Informație privind situația în domeniul Stiințelor Istorice”, 24 iunie, *Ibidem*, ff. 33-34.

⁸⁶ Comitetul regional Cluj al PMR, „Munca de partid în rândurile intelectualilor și studenților”, 23 februarie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.21/1957, f. 155.

managed to gain control over a field of history-production that became increasingly ‘strategic’. By 1957, the party was already calling both for ‘documented rebuttals of unscientific theories’ about the region and for greater integration of Transylvania’s history with that of other Romanian territories.⁸⁷ In order to meet such expectations, Daicoviciu surrounded himself with highly trained historians whom he appointed in the various collectives working on either the national history treatise or on fundamental monographs⁸⁸. What stands out in the case of this group is that its core (F. Pall, Ș. Bezdechi, Ioachim Crăciun, Ș. Pascu, S. Marin, etc.) had sympathized in the aftermath of the Second World War with social-democracy.⁸⁹

Another factor that needs to be taken into account in explaining the promotion of C. Daicoviciu within the historical front is, similar to Oțetea’s case, the overlap between this historian’s scholarly interests and that of the party. One of the lasting obsessions of the communist regime in Romania was the issue of the formation of the Romanian people and language. As I have mentioned earlier, Roller himself was greatly interested in this subject. But, when theories of the predominance of the Slavic element in Romanian’s ethnogenesis and about the formation of the Romanian people South of the Danube faded, Daicoviciu’s and his Transylvanian school of archeological research on the origin of the Romanian people in the mountains and hills of the ancient territory of Dacia (so north of the Danube) increasingly came

⁸⁷ For example Miron Constantinescu, „Observații la ‚Istoria Transilvaniei’ de acad. C. Daicoviciu”, 10 februarie, 7/1960, ff.1-21. This document was directly addressed to RWP’s leader, Gheorghe Ghoerghiu Dej. The thesis of a unitary history of Romanian people in the three Romanian principalities (Moldova, Țara Românească and Transylvania) can be found in C. Daicoviciu, L. Banyai, V. Cheresteșiu, V. Liveanu, „Lupta revoluționară a maselor – factor hotărâtor în Unirea Transilvaniei cu România”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 6, an XI, 1958, pp. 21-36.

⁸⁸ I am referring to C. Daicoviciu, Șt. Pascu, V. Cheresteșiu, B. Surdu, C. Mureșan, A. Egyed, *Din istoria Transilvaniei*, I-II, (București, Ed. Academiei, 1960-1961); C. Daicoviciu, Șt. Pascu, V. Cheresteșiu, Al. Neamțu (vol. I) and V. Cheresteșiu, B. Surdu, C. Mureșan, A. Egyed, *Din istoria Transilvaniei*, ed. a II-a vol. I; ed. a III-a, vol. II, (București, Ed. Academiei:1963).

⁸⁹ See Opris, *Ibidem*, vo. II especially the chapters “Francis Pall – un istoric care nu s-a lăsat corupt,” pp. 107-141 and “Ioachim Crăciun – un biograf social-democrat cu probleme”, pp. 305-338. For the classical description of Daicoviciu see Prodan, *Ibidem*, pp. 159-171 and Constantiniu, *Ibidem*, pp. 93-97. For a detailed account of the relationship between the Cluj historians and the Securitate see Liviu Pleșa, “Metode represive folosite de Securitate..”, *Ibidem*.

to the liking of a party leadership searching to enhance its identity's 'autochthonousness'. Daicoviciu's approach on the topic was a bit more complex, in the sense that his main focus, since his writings in the interwar period, was on the continuity and greatness of Dacians and their 'civilization'. This approach basically re-loaded, in archeology, the party line on the preeminence of the *domestic factor* in the process of historical development. Earlier Daicoviciu adjusted to Roller's stand of rejecting the importance of the Roman influence in the formation of the Romanian language and people. And, once the tide shifted by late 1950s, with similar ease, Daicoviciu switched to applying his theory to the interpretation of a synthetic ethnogenesis (Dacian and Roman). As one author already remarked, the conclusions of the first volume of *Istoria României* (published in 1960) on the problems of the profile, evolution and continuity of the population leaving on the territory of Romania overlapped with Daicoviciu's earlier epistemic struggles to prove beyond doubt the historical right of Romanians over the Danubian-Carpathian territory, especially in reference to Transylvania.⁹⁰ The ultimate confirmation by the communist regime of his 'correct scientific results' on this crucial subject of national history came with the State Prize that he, along with the other historians who coordinated the volume, received in 1962.⁹¹

Daicoviciu also took advantage of the turmoil at the Bolyai University in Cluj during and in the immediate aftermath of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution. When Miron Constantinescu

⁹⁰ Florian Matei-Popescu, „Imaginea Daciei romane..”, pp. 265-288.

⁹¹ By 1960 his position was considered so authoritative that the deputy chief of the Central Committee Section of Science and Culture, V. Dinu, characterized the activity of the Commission for the Study of the Formation of the Romanian People and Language as 'fanciful' based on Daicoviciu opinions on the matter. Daicoviciu rejected altogether a theory formulated mainly by philologists (I. Iordan and Al. Graur – themselves important fellow-traveler academicians) that situated the birth of the Romanian people South of the Danube and subsequent immigration North of the river. Dinu alarmingly remarked in his report that Daicoviciu simply stopped attending the meetings of the Commission. V. Dinu, “Referat privind consfătuirea Comisiei pentru studiul formării limbii și poporului român a Academiei RPR”, 24 martie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no. 4/1962, ff. 26-29.

came to Cluj to evaluate the situation and re-establish control, Daicoviciu successfully introduced his own vision of institutional reform, which, among other issues, included a better assimilation by the students of “the positive aspects of bourgeois higher education”. On December 25, 1956, Daicoviciu was appointed rector of the Babeş University. In the process, he managed to make another friend, by re-confirming Victor Chereşteşiu’s teaching position (the historian replaced by Oţetea on grounds of ‘academic incompetence’). When the Bolyai and Babeş Universities were merged into one (1959), Daicoviciu maintained his rectorship (until 1968).⁹² To conclude this brief description of Daicoviciu’s position within historical front, I would argue that he succeeded in becoming “a double citizen”, that is, a scholar who had the ability to navigate both worlds (the party’s and the academia’s) often acting as a mediator.⁹³

The first consequence of the ‘de-Rollerization’ of the historical front was the transformation of the latter’s profile, its polycentrism. Starting with 1956, the historians who rose against Roller will successfully use the Academy and its institutes for the transformation of the field while brokering deals with various party authorities. They will also establish trans-institutional coalitions, benefiting from the support of three successive Ministers of Education: Ilie Murgulescu, Miron Constantinescu, and Athanasie Joja. Two of these three also alternated their positions in the ministry with leading positions in the Academy’s Presidium. At the same time, despite their personal idiosyncrasies, they managed to collaborate when the time called for it. The fundamental argument used in the offensive against Roller, a theme employed by all

⁹² Müller, *Ibidem*, pp. 299-303. On the unrest among students and professors in 1956 in Cluj see Ioana Boca, *1956 – un an de ruptură: România între internaționalismul proletar și stalinismul antisovietic* (Bucureşti: Editura Academia Civică, 2001) and Ștefano Bottoni, *Transilvania roșie*.

⁹³ John Connelly formulated this coinage in reference to East German scholars who acquired credentials both in the Party and in the academia. See John Connelly, *Captive Universities...*, p. 160.

actors involved was the imperative for scientific history and for an epistemic community regulated by norms developed on the basis of the practice of history as science.

The Department for Propaganda and Culture encouraged and endorsed these principles, adopting a “weatherwave” like behavior. In their interaction with historians, its representatives will adapt their pronouncement in accordance to the changing patterns of overlap between the dominant trends on the historical front and the party pronouncements on state, planned science (and particularly history-production).⁹⁴ Under the circumstances, the dichotomy ‘professional/national historians’ vs ‘party historians’ seems to be a misleading one. It rather obstructs than describes the nature of the personnel changes within the hierarchy of the historical front starting with the second half of the fifties. The up-and-coming historians accepted the crucial premise that history as a science was based on a synthesis between existing traditions and historical materialism. Therefore they not only challenged Roller’s hold institutionally, but also his ability to evaluate the ideological correctness of history-production. In Em. Condurachi’s words, “those who brought initially extensive Marxist knowledge, after ten years, often did not add to it, being stuck with what they knew. For our part, we began to read and we realized that the foretellers are not always right (*nu totdeauna oracolele sunt determinante*).” And his conclusion is predictable: “the treatise [*Istoria Romîniei*] must be written by people cu actually know history, who practice it as a science. Those who are highly trained ideologically cannot write the treatise from beginning to end. Most the work will be done by those who write history in their respective fields. [...] The treatise must be written as a natural urge [*în condițiuni de respirație firească*].” Subsequently, the party representatives should not intimidate the expert but

⁹⁴ I am using Roumen Daskalov’s model of change in the field of history. See Roumen Daskalov, *The Making of a Nation in the Balkans. Historiography of the Bulgarian Revival* (Budapest/New York: CEU Press, 2004), pp. 119-120. David Joransky coined the minds of Soviet ideologues as “weatherwaves” in David Joransky, “The Stalinist Mentality and Higher Learning”, *Slavic Review*, vol.42, no.4, (Winter, 1983), pp.575-600.

“it must guide him.”⁹⁵ Such endorsement and trust placed by the party was interpreted in ‘dialectical’ fashion. On the one hand, according to A. Oțetea, “the members of the profession had to increase combativeness in order to ensure a better ideological preparedness among the young cadres”; on the other, he declared that “ideological influence over the older cadres should be enhanced, for they are willing to approach us, learn and work with us.”⁹⁶ In this context, party representatives considered that historians could not use organizational excuses for not rising to the challenges set by the party: “at this point [in 1957], nobody could say anymore that historical subjects cannot be discussed because of a certain comrade who opposes research of a particular topic. [...] Comrades who suffered in the past are now in position to do their scientific work, to do research, to pursue their interests on daily basis.”⁹⁷ The preliminary conclusion that can be drawn at this point is that the de-rollerization of the historical field also meant a re-adjustment between the interests and objectives of the party regarding history as planned science and the perceptions of historians themselves. The two sets of actors found overlapping interests and the result was an opening up of the epistemic field.

The polycentric historical front was the crucial premise for a transition, between 1955 to 1962, from producing on the basis of “Party dictated truth” to writing history within a “Party defined worldview”.⁹⁸ The meaning and weight of *partiinost* in history-production was re-imagined. “Science”, according to Academy’s President T. Săvulescu, “had to meet the challenge of an epoch in which the people began re-writing history for the rebirth of the

⁹⁵ „Ședința din 10 mai 1957”, *Ibidem*, ff. 13-15.

⁹⁶ “Stenograma Consfătuirii din zilele 30-31 mai 1958”, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.13/1958, f. 88.

⁹⁷ P. Țugui comments according to the transcript of „Ședința din 10 mai 1957”, *Ibidem*, f. 77-78.

⁹⁸ Pollock, *Stalin*, p. 63.

Motherland.”⁹⁹ The way for historians to meet such lofty goal was to produce fundamental research, to write the monographs that would situate the progress of the new socialist society within national and universal history. The historical front that emerged was one functioning on the basis of ‘goal rationality’ (T. H. Rigby)¹⁰⁰. Both the party and historians agreed upon an essential point that was best formulated in 1959 by A. Oțetea: “history’s judgment is a foretelling one. We can decipher it only as interpreters of the present and builders of the future.”¹⁰¹ Once the axiomatic but creative role of the present in making sense of the *national* past was commonly accepted, a new productive equilibrium was reached on the historical front. As we shall see, between 1956 and 1963, this phenomenon was in itself a process with ups and downs. Its nature was open-ended for it was dependent on the ability of the epistemic community to enrich an ever changing party agenda, to push its own priorities, norms, and scientific tradition.

⁹⁹ “Știința în slujba poporului...”, *Ibidem*, f.20.

¹⁰⁰ The definition of “goal rationality” is “the validity of the system’s demands for compliance is claimed to be based on a rational relationship between the ultimate goal of communism and the specific tasks assigned to social units’ and individuals’ rationality”. See T. H. Rigby, ‘Introduction. Political Legitimacy, Weber and Communist Mono-organisational Systems’ in T. H. Rigby and F. Feher (eds.), *Political Legitimation in Communist States* (London, 1982), p. 5.

¹⁰¹ A.Oțetea, „Însemnătatea istorică a Unirii”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 1, an XII, 1959, p 39.

III

A New Historical Agenda and the Consolidation of Planned Science

A. Change on the Historical Front: The Role of *Studii*

The changing agenda for historical-writing in the aftermath of de-Stalinization was evident during the development of the periodical of the Academy's history subsection – *Studii. Revistă de istorie* (from 1955). The shifts that history-production was experiencing in Romania were premised on the 'innovations' promoted at the 'Moscow center'. John Keep identified four main modifications in the dynamics of the Soviet historical front after 1956: "a considerable increase in the number of people actively engaged in historical research and teaching (...); easier access to archive materials (...); the scope of historical study had been greatly broadened (...); closer links have been established between Soviet and non-communist historians."¹ These improvements to the pre-1955 period can be gradually noticed in Romania too. As we have seen, one crucial factor of makeover, the transformation of the personnel on the historical, front was already on full display. Others will almost simultaneously appear: institutional structures, academic practices, and thematic priorities. Analysis of history-production under communism must take into account *all* these factors in order to properly understand its development.

An excellent arena for a thorough survey of such interplay is the most important journal of historical studies in Romania. Just like other such flagships of communist science, *Studii* "was

¹ John Keep, "Introduction", pp. 10-13 in John Keep and Liliana Brisby (eds.), *Contemporary History in the Soviet Mirror* (New York/London: Frederick A. Praeger Publisher, 1964).

supposed not only to publish the research results obtained, but it had to guide the entire activity of the scientific field.” It had “to set the epistemic standard within the community, promoting originality, methodology, and exactness in the research accepted for publication.”² After 1955, *Studii* became the ground for setting benchmarks in the discipline. Such transformation was the result of consonant initiatives. On the one hand, the Department of Agitation and Propaganda (later DPC) found the journal unable to cope with the party-set goal of developing history-production for the purpose of creating monographs able to rehash collective identity. On the other, historians themselves, pushing for the professionalization of the field, embraced the possibility of having a journal that could organize and standardize epistemic exchange. The two tendencies were expressive of *Studii*’s double role: the scientific journal that had to take on the most important topics in the field; and, the central instrument through which the party “spread Marxist-Leninism in the respective science.”³ In other words, *Studii* was the showcase of the historical front in terms of production, hierarchy, and control.

By 1954, the DAP recognized that the journal did not fulfill such lofty a mission and it harshly criticized *Studii*. The DAP recommended a massive re-organization of both the board and of its publishing priorities. It considered that *Studii* did not have enough theoretical articles or materials popularizing Marxism-Leninism and that it was republishing articles from either party organs, such as *Lupta de Clasă* or from the issues of *Voprosy Istorii* already translated into Romanian. Furthermore, *Studii* did not provide, ahead of time, publication plans for each of its issues. Its editors were delivering the final content in the last moment. Even when the materials

² „Plan de măsuri privind îmbunătățirea publicațiilor periodice ale Academiei R.P.R.”, 20 ianuarie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no. 3/1958, ff. 9-10.

³ See P. Țugui’s intervention on this topic at „Stenograma ședinței cu redactorii responsabili ai revistelor de științe sociale din 5 aprilie 1958”, *Ibidem*, f. 26.

were submitted they did not all arrived at the same time.⁴ The main problem with implementing the intended changes was, to quote Valter Roman (director of the Political Publishing House), that “*Studii* is comrade Roller’s dearest child.” Both political and editorial issues depended on his final say.⁵

The periodical’s activity was ‘professionalized’ through the nomination of an editor-in-chief, a deputy editor, secretary of the board, and a technical editor. The publication plan was decided and supervised by an editorial board comprising all relevant actors of the historical field. In November 1955, when the first nominations for the new leadership of the Academy’s History Institute were made, the DAP also listed the editors of *Studii*: Ion Gheorghiu, Nicolae Fotino, Vasile Liveanu, Lia Lehr, Pagu Aghir (listed in the order of the positions enumerated above).⁶ The new editorial staff was a narrow improvement to Roller’s hegemony. But the ground for further changes at the board was set. Roller will see his influence over *Studii* greatly diminished once V. Cheresteşiu and A. Roman, after being demoted from positions in the Academy’s History Institute, lost their prominence on *Studii*’s editorial board. The first was eliminated altogether from it, the second fell to the second position in the board and, by the fifth issue in 1956, he was merely one of the editors (listed seventh out of eight). The new head of the editorial board was now A. Oţetea, seconded by Gh Haupt. Roller maintained his membership in the board, but he was merely one among peers with no definitive say in the journal’s policies.

Under Oţetea, *Studii* followed two fundamental directions: first, it tried to integrate pre-communist historians’ work into the epistemic discourse of history-production; second,

⁴ “Referat cu privire la activitatea Editurii Academiei RPR”, 23 noiembrie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secţia de Propagandă şi Agitaţie, no.64/1955, f. 117.

⁵ “Stenogramă luată în ziua de 17 noiembrie 1954...”, *Ibidem*, ff. 38-41.

⁶ “Referat cu privire la unele aspect ale muncii institutului de istorie al Academiei RPR din Bucureşti”, 23 septembrie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secţia de Propagandă şi Agitaţie, no.64/1955, f.70

historiographical traditions were used in order to reassess themes and topics developed by pre-communist historical writing. His initiatives during the tenure at *Studii* resemble the reform that Anna Pankratova and Eduard Burdzhlov initiated at *Voprosy istorii* between 1953 and 1957. Pankratova and Burdzhlov's fundamental argument was that history-production should adjust to the changes in the ideological stand of the party, that is, it needed to be in tune with de-Stalinization.⁷ The new editorial board at *Studii* tried to emulate the civilizational center's logic of development, while also drawing specificities of its own. Most importantly, Pankratova and Burdzhlov sought after change in the realm of party history. In Romania, Oțetea and his colleagues from *Studii* operated within the coordinates of national history. It was so mainly because the RWP had not yet settled upon a master-narrative on the role of the party in history. It will happen only after 1955, reflecting the stabilization of the communist leadership at the top. Any sort of revisionism could be experienced in the sector where a dominant discourse already existed. It therefore took the form of de-rollerization, of constructing an interpretation of national history different from that inscribed in Roller's high school textbook – the pre-1955 paradigmatic text. The phenomenon in question was an example of how history-production had become “less of a reflex action and more of a dialogue between historians and politicians.”⁸

In the Soviet Union, the push for a new approach to historical research was encouraged by the CPSU's leadership. A. Mikoyan declared that “if our *historians* [...] were to delve properly into the archives and historical documents, and not only on the back issues of newspapers, they would be able to give a better explanation, from the positions of Leninism, of many of the facts

⁷ Pankratova became candidate member of the RPR Academy in 1957. For a full account of the Pankratova-Burdzhlov affair in Soviet historical studies see Markwick, *Rewriting History* and Heer, *Politics and History*.

⁸ Nancy Heer, *Politics and History*, p. 38.

and events dealt with in the *Short Course*.”⁹ At the Twentieth Congress, Mikoyan, “while bemoaning the theoretical poverty of Soviet social science as a whole, singled out party and Soviet history as its ‘most backward’ branch.”¹⁰ His message was heard as far as Bucharest. For example, V Maciu (member of *Studii*’s editorial board, a historian promoted to the highest positions during the communist regime, until 1956 head of the National Archives, vice-president of the Society for Historical Studies) used Mikoyan’s statements to justify his criticism of dogmatism on the Romanian historical front.¹¹ The signals from Moscow came also in a more direct fashion. One article, which I mentioned in the previous chapter, emphasized the importance of scientific tradition in the development of history-production. It stressed the value of a nuanced discussion of the influence that historical determinations had on historiography, the latter’s dependence on the level of scientific development, the novel elements brought about at various times by either pre-communist historians or those from the non-communist countries. It concluded that historians in the West, despite their ideological misgivings, were by all means true scientists. At the same time, the article argued that the study of historiographical schools can provide important knowledge for the betterment of Marxist-Leninist historical writing. Moreover, history could not be limited to a national context for science could only progress if situated in interdependence with developments from other countries.¹² The transformations

⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 67

¹⁰ Roger Markwick, *Rewriting History...*, p. 38.

¹¹ Maciu remarks how between 1944 and 1952 six to seven thousand archival units were destroyed, how the Bucharest University archive, the section of it until 1934, was melted. See „Ședința din 10 mai 1957”, *Ibidem*, f. 35 and f. 41.

¹² „Studiul istoriei și științei istorice”, *Ibidem*, pp. 11-16. In direct continuation of the themes touched upon by the article from *Voprosy Istorii*, the next issue of *Studii* included one of the papers presented at the Xth International Congress of Historical Studies in Rome that dealt with the main currents in contemporary historiography. The author, Gastone Manacorda, an Italian Marxist, argued that a unitary vision of history, as the Marxist approach promoted, would bridge the methodological gap separating the schools centered around the principle of the uniqueness of the historical event and the *Annales* school. In similar fashion, at the Stockholm Congress five years later, Manacorda declared that only the study of the history of historiography can provide trans-ideological answers in the process of finding the scientific basis of history. This will constitute a lasting justificatory model in Romanian

taking place in the Soviet Union were therefore exported to the periphery. Romanian historical studies were lining up for change and *Studii* was reproducing the standards formulated at the center.

In the context of the writing of national history treatise, *Studii* was given the task to be the scene upon which historians would debate the main topics of the monograph in the making. To quote a DPC document from 1958, the journal was meant “to accelerate the crystallization of unitary standpoints on important periods of the history of our motherland.”¹³ There were two means through which it would do this: programmatic articles and the publication of the discussions of the central topics of the treatise. One preliminary conclusion that could be drawn from the above list of assignments set for *Studii* is that the journal was maybe the most important instrument for the *normalization* of Romanian historical studies as Marxist-Leninist science. To use Kuhnian language, *Studii* signaled out past scientific achievements that the historical front acknowledged as foundation for its progress. Simultaneously it clarified the agenda of future research by means of setting limitations of the possible interpretations that could be given to landmark topics of national history.¹⁴ One should not forget that this operation of setting restrictions on solutions to historical puzzles was a two-partner dance, with the DPC playing a determining role in the process.

From 1957 until the beginning of 1958, *Studii* persevered in its new role. It published articles about several important representatives of the Romanian historical tradition (Vasile

history-production that allowed for the local epistemic community a constant expansion of its methodological toolkit derived from the pre-communist tradition. See Gastone Manacorda, “Curentele istoriografiei contemporane la Congresul al X-lea al științelor istorice”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 4, an 9, 1956, pp. 166-173 and Karl Dietrich Erdmann, *Toward a Global Community of Historians. The International Historical Congresses and the International Committee of Historical Sciences, 1898-2000* (New York/ Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2005), p. 302. Erdmann characterizes Manacorda as “critical, undogmatic Marxist”

¹³ “Referat privind revistele de științe sociale pe anul 1957,” 8 aprilie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no. 9/1958, f. 44

¹⁴ Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure*, p.10 and p. 38.

Pârvan, C. Dobrogeanu-Gherea, A. D. Xenopol, B. P. Hașdeu¹⁵). It also recounted on its pages some of the debates on this topic from the scientific sessions of either the Academy's institutes or the history departments of the various universities. At the same time, it approached fundamental topics such as the periodization of national history, the 1877 war of independence, the development of feudalism, the 1821 revolt of Tudor Vladimirescu, the 1848 revolution, the Vienna Second Award, etc. The second category of articles was also a pretext for introducing to the epistemic community the standpoints of pre-communist historians on these issues.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, one of the means of re-instituting the discipline was that of identifying its founding-fathers. For archeology, it was V Pârvan; for Slavic studies and collection of documents on national history, it was I Bogdan; for materialist approaches to historical-writing, B. P. Hașdeu; or, for historical-writing based specific regularities (*zakonomernosti*) in distinct periods of time, A. D. Xenopol. Moreover, one overarching figure for these attempts of positioning epistemic tradition within the historiography of a new type was N. Iorga, the most important and well-known Romanian pre-communist historian. Until 1960, his contributions are taken as a mixed bag: his merits as dominating figure of historical studies in Romania were recognized along with some of his approaches to various topics that were considered consonant to contemporary interpretations; and, his position was criticized for idealism and subjectivism, while his involvement in politics and strongly conservatism were

¹⁵ Radu Vulpe, „Activitatea științifică a istoricului Vasile Pârvan”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 3, an X, 1957, pp. 7-37; Gh. Haupt, „Începutul activității revoluționare a lui C. Dobrogeanu-Gherea,” *Ibidem*; Z. Ornea, „Contribuții la cunoașterea opiniilor social-economice ale lui A. D. Xenopol”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 4, an X, 1957, pp. 69-90; Aurelian Sacerdoteanu, „Concepția istorică a lui B. P. Hașdeu”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 5, an X, 1957, pp.141-159. What stands out is that some of the people chosen to write these articles were directly linked to the traditions they were analyzing: Vulpe was one of Pârvan's closest collaborators, while Sacerdoteanu used to be N. Iorga's assistant, secretary at the latter's Institute of Universal History. At the same time, such articles were deemed crucial by the DPC for “no reconsiderations of great historians and other intellectuals, such as Pârvan, Iorga, and Xenopol, were yet written. The last generations of historians have not been exposed to their theories.” “Informare cu privire la munca politică în rândurile intelectualilor universitari”, 13 februarie, *Ibidem*, f. 9.

rejected. Later though, by 1965, Iorga will become a symbolic cornerstone for the communist historical front. For the moment, *Studii* preferred to limit itself to the rather ambiguous characterizations of “the Iorga phenomenon”, to use M Kandel, a historian promoted by the communist regime with no presence within the academic community before 1945.¹⁶ This set of articles along with several lectures presented in the pages of *Studii* imposed the idea of a founding triad for Romanian history as a science, pointing to names of Iorga, I. Bogdan, and D. Onciul. Though early, with a backlash waiting to happen from the DPC quarters, this thesis will stick on the historical front, providing it with the founding fathers. It basically allowed a continuous flow of reconsiderations of pre-communist historiography, the re-invention of tradition in Romanian history-production.

Most importantly, however, is that the process of reconsidering the work of these historians (and of many others who are discussed in a less direct fashion) was also a means to legitimize both historical materialism inspired approaches and standpoints that were rather new and contrasting to the existent, accepted historiographical solutions. The article dealing with Pârvan’s work, despite accepting the fundamental importance of materialism in research, it brings to the fore the issue of studying the culture of a people in order to properly map out its historical evolution. R. Vulpe, quoted Pârvan’s lecture “Our Life’s Duty”, in which the latter argued that “for history, culture is the only possible subject. [...] Where culture is born, history begins.” Moreover, Pârvan’s interpretation of the formation of the Romanian people was deemed as paradigmatic for future research, a legitimizing starting point for current research. His emphasis

¹⁶ M. Kandel’s lecture “Some Problems of Medieval History in the Work of N. Iorga” see *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 5, an IX, 1956, p. 139. The synthetic approach to Iorga went as far as using his writings to justify the inextricable relationship between Romanian and Russian history and, subsequently, the importance of their combined research. One author quoted Iorga saying that “they [Russia and Romania] were not just neighbors, sometimes they simply cohabitated.” See Gheorghe Bezviconi, “Despre necesitatea unei bibliografii a relațiilor române-ruse”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 5, an IX, 1956, p. 145.

on the excellence and continuity of the Romanian people's Dacian component only validated the dominant themes on the topic for the second half of the fifties. Overall, Pârvan was presented as "a hero to the duty to his people's culture, which he wanted as brilliant and authentic as possible."¹⁷ The article about A. D. Xenopol dwelled extensively upon the historian's search for a scientific method based on identifying the serial progression of facts ordered by the principle of causality. Moreover, one element of Xenopol's writings made him, according to the author, highly relevant for the present: his defense of protectionism as the only valid policy for a country merely beginning its journey into modernity. From this viewpoint, Z. Ornea revealed another contribution of Xenopol to scientific progress, that is, the latter's insistence that "the foundation of a people's existence is its economy. We can boast as much as we can with our literature, poetry, science or with our great politicians, but it will amount to nothing if the understructure of our house will be shaken by others."¹⁸ At a time when the RWP was increasingly emphasizing domestic industrialization, crash collectivization, and economic self-sufficiency, this argument brought from the past could only be welcomed. The piece about Hașdeu was another article, among many historiographical interventions, that used works from the past to justify the importance of a clarification about the problem of the Romanian people's ethnogenesis. Hașdeu was taken as a precursor of the work done in 'bringing out of the darkness of history' a putative uniqueness and greatness of the Dacian 'civilization', considered equally important counterpart to the Roman influence. Hașdeu was also described as the precursor of contemporary advocates of objective and scientific history-production.

¹⁷ R. Vulpe, *Ibidem*, p. 13, 24, and 37. According to party DPC documents, Vulpe's article was published despite significant opposition against it from some members of the editorial board. The article was criticized for ignoring Pârvan's idealist conception of history: "the author ignores the fact that emphasis on the materialist aspect of history appears in Pârvan's work only when he analyzes concrete subjects, but not in his general theory of history." See „Stenograma ședinței cu redactorii responsabili ai revistelor de științe sociale din 5 aprilie 1958”, *Ibidem*, ff. 44-45.

¹⁸ Z. Ornea, *Ibidem*, p. 78.

These contributions and others that touched upon the problem of epistemic tradition constituted pioneering attempts in making sense of the dialectical principle according to which, on the path of perfecting history as a science, the operation of “capitalizing on some historians’ past contributions, separating from their work what was valuable and useful” went hand with “increasing vigilance toward unscientific, bourgeois theories” and to “other reactionary currents in history-production from abroad.”¹⁹ Such ambivalence will allow for permanent control against perceived deviation on the historical front. The premises upon which a pre-communist author was reclaimed for the historiography of a new type were still those dictated by the party. One dominant theme in the articles discussed was to adjust the personality of Pârvan, Xenopol, Gherea, or Hașdeu to a progressive blueprint. In other words, their political opinions were neutralized. Each of the four interpreters allocate significant sections of their articles to the description of how, for example, Pârvan criticized the unjust socio-political order, Xenopol attacked liberalism, Hașdeu was not a chauvinist and he defended the rights of the disenfranchised, or how Gherea was directly involved in the pre-history of the revolutionary movement in Romania. All of them were indeed criticized for idealism, subjectivism, or opportunism, but the articles fundamentally meant to integrate them into the conceptual groundwork of socialist historiography. One of the authors mentioned above emphatically criticized

...the effacement of the distinctions between the obvious differences within the position and thinking of various thinkers, the schematic reduction of the work of our sages to the positions of the class they were coming from. What is surely even more dangerous is that following this path we will lose the ability to show the extent of the overlap of a thinker’s positions with those of his respective class and the point from which his efforts beyond the limits of the class of whose ideologue he is (of course, if such distinctions can be really derived from his work and activity).²⁰

¹⁹ „Marea Revoluție Socialistă din Octombrie și problemele fundamentale ale științei istorice”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 5, an X, 1957, p. 14.

²⁰ Z. Ornea, *Ibidem*, p. 73. Vulpe and Sacerdoteanu make similar statements in their contributions.

Two other articles stand out from those published in 1957. The first one is A. Oțetea's presentation of the criteria for periodization of national history. Of course, he focused first on the forces of production and the change of the modes of production. But he then shifted his argument to the influence of the suprastructure in the explanation of historical development: "political, juridical, artistic, philosophical and religious ideas along with the institutions that materialized these ideas [...] Cultural traditions, schools of thought, influence of past ideas coexist under historical circumstances of different nature [...] A scientific periodization must take into account...the particularities of each national history."²¹ The weight of this principle will show toward the end of the decade as the national history treatise was being finalized. The emphasis on the importance of culture will allow for a gradual and ultimately irreversible reconsideration of the national past toward an increasingly indigenizing identitarian narrative. Such an approach will constitute the prerequisite to the analysis of social emancipation as inextricably linked to the problem of Romanian people's formation, development, national awakening, and transcendence to the level of nation.

The second article with normative value for the history-production of the later years is that of S. Ștefănescu on the historiography of feudalism in Romania. While the overall conclusion was that bourgeois historical writing ignored, minimized, or mis-analyzed this topic, the piece does construct an epistemic genealogy upon which it builds its own interpretation. There are two starting points to Ștefănescu's article: the centrality of the people's history rather than that of political personalities, an expression of the post-1956 dogma of the people being the true makers of history; and, the determining importance of socio-economic history for the clarification of societal development. In this context, feudalism, in contrast to pre-communist

²¹ Andrei Oțetea, „Problema periodizării istoriei României”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 6, an X, 1957, pp.105.

writings, was presented as an internal, structural phenomenon resultant from the organic evolution from one mode of production to another. The novel approach was, however, legitimized by long existing desiderata of Romanian history-production: Hașdeu's exhortations about the imperative to enlighten the dark spots of the people's history; I. Bogdan's pleas for the publication and translation of the archival documents on the basis of which national history would be written; N. Iorga's advocacy of the critical method in the interpretation of these documents.²² At the same time, Ștefănescu, after reviewing several Romanian theories about feudalism²³, does manage to find a founding father of the contemporary, scientific approach on the subject: P. P. Panaitescu. The latter argued that feudalism in the Romanian territories was based on existing social conditions rather than it appeared as the result of legislation. His interpretation was considered the most advanced of all those discussed, a true breakthrough on the discussion of the topic. The fact that by 1957 Panaitescu was already considered a fundamental reference²⁴ on an area of history-production will only be confirmed by his cooption as author for *Istoria României*.

A third topic discussed in 1957 in *Studii* was the role of the bourgeoisie in national history; more precisely, to quote Oțetea, at which point "the bourgeoisie transformed from a

²² Despite strongly criticizing his approach, Ștefănescu stresses the fact that "Iorga by himself is an epoch in Romanian historiography...he left behind a most generous historiographical production." See Ștefan Ștefănescu, „date cu privire la problema relațiilor feudale pe teritoriul Țării Românești în istoriografia românească”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 1, an X, 1957, p. 206.

²³ Ștefănescu's analysis can also be read as a review of Romania's most important historians of the middle ages, a crash introduction in their work. He starts with N. Bălcescu (considered the father of modern, scientific historical writing) then moves to people such as: Hașdeu, Bogdan, Iorga, Radu Rosetti, Gh. Panu, C. Giurescu, or I. C. Fillitti.

²⁴ 1957 and 1958 were turbulent year for Panaitescu. On the one hand, he will receive the "Nicolae Bălcescu" Prize of the Academy for his contribution at the editing of the four volumes of documents on national history. On the other, he was arrest for a short time and investigated as 'enemy of the people'. See „Referat privind unele aspecte ale muncii politice în rândul intelectualilor”, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.9/1958, f. 80. His position, during the legionary state, of rector of Bucharest University and of director of the Iron Guard newspaper *Cuvântul* haunted him throughout the fifties.

progressive class into a reactionary one.”²⁵ The principle behind such a puzzle was that “in some moment of our country’s history various classes with antagonistic interests could act in concert against external enemies, against foreign invaders.” Moreover, “historical personalities [regardless of the class they belong to] rose from the ranks of the Romanian people, thousands of heroes who loved and devoted their lives to the motherland and the people, sometimes even making the ultimate sacrifice for its sake.”²⁶ In other words, concepts such as independence, unification, national freedom and emancipation are triggers for a communitarian, rather than class-based, analysis of Romanian history. They were considered norms of national progress across history. If in this phase of history-production under communism they were derived from economic development, they nevertheless opened the door, if coupled with emphases on unitary culture and consciousness, to a populist, inclusionary and expansive vision of the national community. For example, V. Maciu stated that in 1877 *all* social classes (for different reasons) were in favor of Romania’s independence. A more qualified position offered N. Adăniloae, who argued that some classes did not have a patriotic attitude at the time of the independence war. Nevertheless, both authors agree that within the bourgeoisie there was section whose interests overlapped with those of the ‘working classes’.²⁷ Both of them attempted to overcome a paradox of the existing historiography: on the one hand, the war and the Principalities’ political emancipation were considered just, progressive events; on the other, the classes that held power at the time are undifferentiatedly labeled reactionary. This dilemma would replicate itself in the analysis of all turning-point moments of Romania’s modern history: 1821, 1848, 1877, and

²⁵ Andrei Oțetea, „Problema periodizării istoriei României”, *Ibidem*, p. 110.

²⁶ Of course, “the only constant defenders of the motherland’s independence, the only conscious defenders of national freedom have been the producers of goods, the peasants and later the working-class.” See „Educația patriotică și sarcinile științei istoriei”, *Ibidem*, p.11-12.

²⁷ Vasile Maciu, „Cu privire la războiul pentru independența României”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 4, an X, 1957, pp. 111-133 and N. Adăniloae, „Unele probleme privind războiul de independență 1877-1878”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 6, an X, 1957, pp.111-130.

1914-1918. The ensuing debate generated by these articles (and others such as these published from the end of 1955 until the beginning of 1958) will set the limits of the recuperation of tradition. These discussions will also signal the opening up of research on modern history toward a centeredness to national authenticity.

The issue of the role of personality in history was dealt with by B. Câmpina in an article about Stephen the Great in 1957. The greatness of the voievod's rule was "a showcase of the unbeatable powers that the people give to rulers in any struggle for the defense of its freedom."²⁸ The importance of this article lied in the fact that it will set the standard for the description of other warlords from the Middle Ages. These individuals' battles for maintaining of their rule under the external pressures (mainly the Ottoman Empire and the Hungarian Kingdom) will epitomize, according to history-production at the beginning of the 1960s, the civilizational peak reached by the Romanian people from the fourteenth until mid sixteenth centuries. To paraphrase Athanasie Joja, such personalities will increasingly personify a *Weltgeist*, the spirit of historical necessity and rationality that shaped up in struggles of simultaneous social and national liberation.²⁹ Slowly but surely, from Câmpina's analysis of Stephen the Great's capacity to understand the imperative of a dual struggle for the people's freedom *and* for the adaptation of the state's organization to new conditions of production and exchange³⁰, a sense of destiny on the road to progress will be draped on such historical figures.

What is most transparent in many of the articles published in *Studii* during the Oțetea's directorship is a certain sense of mission. The journal, under its new leadership, was bent on

²⁸ Barbu T. Câmpina, „Ideile călăuzitoare ale politicii lui Ștefan cel Mare”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 4, an X, 1957, p. 66.

²⁹ Athanasie Joja, „Despre logica istoriei”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, [1947-1962 Cercetarea Istoriei României în anii Puterii Populare] 6, an XV, 1962, p. lii.

³⁰ B. Câmpina și M. Berza, „Sfârșitul lui Ștefan cel Mare. Personalitatea sa”, p. 549 in A. Oțetea et al. *Istoria României vol. II* (București: Editura Academiei RPR, 1962).

righting the methodological and thematic wrongs of the previous years. The editorial board under A. Oțetea fully embraced the idea of history as a *national science*. This attitude was confirmed by an article published in 1956 by D. Berindei about the Literary Society (later it became the Academic Society), the forebearer of the RPR Academy. It was an anniversary piece, 90 years since the founding of the Academy. The similarities with T. Săvulescu's speech on the same occasion are striking. Leaving aside the triumphalist tone, Berindei employed in some parts of his contribution exactly the same quotations as the Academy's president.³¹ What stands out is the underlying idea of national rebirth through culture and science. Berindei put forth a plethora of statements by 'accepted' personalities from the 1860s in order to bring his main point home: a unitary Romanian language was the foundation of a common culture; the latter was the vehicle of the nation's revival, thus leading to the beginning of a new epoch of national development.³²

However, these tendencies did not progress as smoothly as some representatives of the historical field might have expected. The side-effects of de-Stalinization at the international level (the Hungarian revolution and the Poznan strikes in Poland) and the priorities of socialist transformation in Romania put the brakes on an all-out return of tradition and on the descent into nationalist, unilateral interpretations of the past. At the same time, the nature of the historical front itself did not allow for such sudden change. Its core norm was that of synthesis between historical materialism and national historiography.

³¹ Most of the memoir literature about the historical front indicates that during the fifties Berindei made a habit from helping P. Constantinescu-Iași with both research and writing. In 1956, Constantinescu-Iași was the president of Academy's section of historical studies, economy, and law. Most probably, Săvulescu asked the section to draft a speech for the institutions' 90th anniversary. Consequently, Constantinescu-Iași employed his assistant for the task. The publication of Berindei's article is proof of the direct connection between the transformation of the Academy and the changing nature of the historical front.

³² Dan Berindei, „Înființarea Societății Literare (Academice) (1866) și sesiunea din 1867”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 5, an IX, 1956, pp. 21-42.

B. Party Control in a System of Co-Option: The Reorganization of *Studii*.

In 1957 and 1958, the RWP's top leadership was in turmoil. Gheorghe Gheroghiu-Dej established his unchallenged rule over the party by purging the so-called Constantinescu-Chișinevschi and Doncea-Șandru factions.³³ In strikingly similar fashion to the circumstances brought about by Khrushchev's elimination of the anti-party faction in the Soviet Union, this house-cleaning provided an opportunity for re-affirming ideological control over the historical front. In mind-1957, the head of the Central Committee's Section for Science and Culture remarked that his institution did not get involved almost at all in history-production during that particular period. He stated that most the issues discussed with historians concerned the organization of the field and its cadres. But, "the general problems of guidance, of orientation were the responsibility of the Academy's subsection."³⁴ Almost a year later, by 1958, a DPC document alarmingly noted that "at the level of the Academy's History Institute, even among its party members, a certain objectivism and apolitism can be noticed in dealing with historical subjects."³⁵ Others, such as Ștefan Voicu (member of the RWP's Central Committee and, from 1962, the editor in chief of the party journal *Lupta de clasă*) offered an even harsher diagnosis of the situation: "*Studii* is a channel through which bourgeois influences are introduced [...] We are witnesses of a systematic attack against the Marxist viewpoint on problems of history."³⁶ The head of the Department for Publications and Newspapers, I Ardeleanu, one of the most important censors, declared that comrades from the historical front seemed "to have forgotten the most important question that we always have to ask ourselves when it comes to the ideological content

³³ Vladimir Tismaneanu, *Stalinism for All Seasons*.

³⁴ „Ședința din 10 mai 1957”, *Ibidem*, f. 77.

³⁵ „Informare privind situația activității în institutele de cercetări de științe sociale”, 28 mai, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.9/1958, f. 49.

³⁶ „Stenograma Consfăturii din zilele 30-31 mai 1958”, *Ibidem*, f. 95.

of a materials: whom is it useful to? Is it useful for the proletariat?”³⁷ The DPC concluded that during the struggle against the vulgarization of Marxism-Leninism in history-production, some sections of the historical front had fallen under the influence of bourgeois theories about historical events and phenomena.³⁸ Measures needed to be taken so that the epistemic communist would be awakened from its “ideological drowsiness” (Rauser).

Two contentious moments triggered the forceful intervention of the party in the dynamics of *Studii*. The first was the Oțetea’s handling of S. Știrbu’s book on T. Vladimirescu’s revolt in 1821. I already partly discussed this subject (see previous chapter); what needs to be stressed here is that Oțetea tried to set an example in his criticism of Știrbu’s volume. His two reviews (the second a response of Știrbu’s reply) basically argued that

the analysis is full of mistakes and therefore it does not contribute with anything to the clarification of the subject discussed. It only shows the author’s gaps of general culture and his lack of specialization. [...] S. Știrbu’s volume is merely a chaotic work of a dilettante lacking expertise, general education, and intellectual honesty. Such a book can only generate confusion and it offers a false image about Romanian historical science.³⁹

The clash between the two produced two articles of arbitration that attempted to publicly settle the dispute. Oțetea’s main complaints were accepted overall. His style of rebuke, however, was labeled unprincipled⁴⁰, for, according to one of these texts, he did not make a distinction between the unpalatable points made by Știrbu and the latter’s debatable statements on the above-mentioned topic. Both of them were accused of subjectivism.⁴¹ For Oțetea, this proved more damaging as the allegation was coupled with criticisms against his perceived monopolistic

³⁷ *Ibidem*, f. 176.

³⁸ „Informație cu privire la consfătuirea din 30-31 mai 1958 care a avut loc la Direcția de Propagandă și Cultură a CC al PMR”, 7 iunie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no. 37/1958, f. 70.

³⁹ A Oțetea, “O nouă istorie a mișcării din 1821”, *Studii. Revista de Istorie*, an X, no. 2, 1957, pp. 201-212

⁴⁰ In 1955, Oțetea and Știrbu travelled together for a research trip to Moscow to work of archives related to the 1821 movement in Romania. Oțetea will be accused by his critics that he glossed over this detail in an attempt to monopolize the information from these new documents.

⁴¹ „În legătură cu discuția privitoare la cartea tov. S. Știrbu *Războiul din 1821 și legăturile ei cu evenimentele internaționale*”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 4, an X, 1957, pp.197-198.

tendencies over the historical front. To make matters worse, his review had not been submitted for approval to the DPC prior to its publication. This fact was taken to be representative of his management style, for it seems, according to several DPC documents, that he bypassed the Department's approval for several other articles and reviews.⁴² The accusations against Oțetea's administrative misgivings at *Studii* are very similar to those formulated against Burzhdalov in the case of *Voprosy Istorii*. The Soviet historian behind the initial revisionist trend in party history was reprimanded because "meetings of the editorial board were not called regularly...close friends of the editorial staff rather than most qualified specialists in various fields of knowledge were asked to write articles."⁴³ One of Oțetea's colleagues complained about "the lack of unity within the editorial board" (E. Stănescu) at the Romanian journal too. With the exception of the tone, Oțetea basically repeated here the same criticisms he voiced against Roller. But in Știrbu's case, the party set a limit on how far historians promoted in the first years of popular democracy could be criticized.

The second instance in which Oțetea's intervention brought about the wrath of the DPC leadership was a more complex one. It was related to the various debates generated by the first meetings regarding the national history treatise and it mainly concerned the role of the bourgeoisie in Romania's modern history. As we have seen earlier, between late 1955 and the beginning of 1958, in *Studii* there was a tendency for reconsidering this class's role (or at least of some of its sections) in various moments during the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century. Here the situation was more dangerous. Any attempt to search for progressive forces, other than the peasantry and the working-class, could run against the Khrushchivite

⁴² What most likely happened is that he got them approved by members of the Section of Science and Culture, but did not approach L. Răutu, head of the DCP, directly. Upon the tightening of ideological control across the country and within the whole Soviet bloc, Oțetea's leverage significantly diminished.

⁴³ N. Heer, *Politics and History...*, p. 51.

principle that only the popular masses were the true creators of history. At the same time, such an attempt could breach the dogmas of class-determination in historical action and of the permanence of class-struggle. But the most important corollary to this discussion was the fact that a more inclusive analysis of the Romanian people could allow for a more diachronic approach to national history on the basis of concepts such as unity, continuity, and consciousness.

The general framework of criticism against the leadership of the Academy's Institute of History in Bucharest and against *Studii*'s editorial board was formulated in an editorial article published at the end of 1958. The piece, entitled "On the Consistent Application of Marxism-Leninism Theory in Historical Research", remarked that there was a tendency of "justifying politically the position of the bourgeoisie in works on Romania's modern history. [...] The decisive role of the masses in historical development was undervalued. [...] research focused exclusively on the policies of bourgeois and landowners' parties."⁴⁴ Earlier, in 1957, several DPC documents already listed the contentious subjects within the historical front as a result of the debates ignited by the writing of *Istoria României*: the nature of the 1916-1918 war; the role of the bourgeoisie during the 1877 war of independence; the importance of the "Great October Socialist Revolution"; the uncritical presentation of bourgeois historiography; the character of Tudor Vladimirescu's revolt; overt or indirect opposition to fundamental tenets of historical materialism. At the same time, the same documents pointed to some organizational issues that marred history-production: the mistakes made in the past (with implicit reference to Roller); the unsatisfactory collaboration between the Academy's History Institute and the Institute for Party

⁴⁴ „Pentru aplicarea consecventă a teoriei marxist-leninite în cercetările istorice”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 6, an XI, 1958, pp. 13-15.

History; the inability of younger historians to assert themselves in the profession.⁴⁵ In the present section of the chapter I will only briefly discuss the first set of problems signaled out by these documents (with further analysis following in the chapter on the writing of national history). The second set I will discuss in the part of the chapter analyzing the personnel and institutional changes of the late 50s and early 60s.

The lead article from the last issue of *Studii* in 1958, summarized the main error that marred historical writing in the previous two years: “bourgeois objectivism, which can be noticed lately in various works of our historians, obstructs the contradictions of the historical process, hides class antagonism. [...] It legitimizes the activity of the exploiting classes, arguing that their actions were commended by the objective determinations of social development and that they were their only possible options under the imperative of social progress.”⁴⁶ In other words, the watchdogs of ideological purity were not yet ready to accept a vision of the Romanian people as critical mass of social strata that overcame class struggle for the sake of fulfilling the necessary objectives of national historical development. To take the point further, the RWP did not yet develop a sense of legitimacy based upon the development of state formations during the modern history of the country. In focusing on the definitive role of the people (as an abstract, rather undefined agent of history), the party line in history-production was struggling to separate the accomplishment of necessary stages of development (in accordance with the historical materialist blueprint) from their materialization into various political-institutional formations.

⁴⁵ „Referat privind unele probleme ale activității științifice pe tărâmul istoriei”, 30 ianuarie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no. 5/1959, ff. 3-11; „Notă cu privire la situația în domeniul științei istorice”, 30 aprilie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no. 5/1957, ff. 44-47; „Notă privind unele fenomene negative din domeniul științei istorice”, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no. 6/1959, ff. 213-215.

⁴⁶ „Pentru aplicarea consecventă a teoriei marxist-leninite în cercetările istorice”, *Ibidem*, p. 18.

Any state that was not a popular democracy was a form of dictatorship. And its existence was the result of the betrayal of the exploiting classes.

For example, obtaining independence in 1877 was a great achievement, but the fact that land reform was not passed only served to show again the reactionary nature of the Romanian state and that the bourgeoisie could not fulfill its role in history.⁴⁷ Or, the unification of Romania with Transylvania in 1918 was a triumph of the people and a logical step toward the unification of the forces of production and of the market within the territory of Romania. At the same time, the fact that the ruling classes quashed the revolutionary hopes of the people between 1918 and 1920, that they joined in the game of imperialist domination, the fact that the Romanian state was built against the first workers' state, the Soviet Union, proved that the bourgeoisie could simply not rise to its historical role of agent for bourgeois-democratic revolution. To take this logic to its conclusion, it was considered that only in 1945, with the revolutionary breakthrough of the communist party did it cease this constant policy of national betrayal.⁴⁸ Such types of historiographical encodings were dominant for the pre-1964 master narrative: political history was a source of legitimacy by contrast rather than by example of progressive statecraft anticipative to the communist nation-state project. As we shall see in the following chapter, only social and cultural unitary development of the Romanian people could validate talking about the nation in history writing. The nation was yet to become an organic subject of history because

⁴⁷ for example, in the forth volume of the national history treatise one of the authors, Nichita Adăniloae, of the chapter on 1877-1878 events concluded: "above anybody else, the bourgeoisie reaped the fruits of victory, as it got richer and it consolidated its domination." For the complete interpretation see Vasile Maciu and Nichita Adăniloae, "Războiul pentru cucerirea independenței României", pp. 586-642, P Constantinescu-Iași et al., *Istoria României*, vol IV (București: Editura Academiei RPR, 1964). I also wish to point to the fact that the same historians who were accused of misrepresenting the role of the bourgeoisie in 1877 and 1878 were disciplined into adjusting their positions to the party line. Their compliance, however, on the long run proved profitable: Adăniloae was named, in 1965, head of the modern history section of the Academy's History Institute in Bucharest; Maciu will replace P Constantinescu-Iași as the president of the Society of Historical Sciences.

⁴⁸ C. Daicoviciu, L. Banyai, V. Cheresteșiu, V Liveanu, „Lupta revoluționară a maselor – factor hotărâtor în Unirea Transilvaniei cu România”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 6, an XI, 1958, pp. 21-36.

“not all of its constitutive elements appeared at the same time.”⁴⁹ One fundamental theme that will stay in place even after the 1958 backlash will be the necessary progressive role of national popular development. It will prove a useful premise that later production will build upon.

The 1958 party intervention at *Studii* was in fact a reaffirmation of the dialectical nature of the process of systemic consolidation under communism. The professionalization of the historical front and its thematic emancipation needed to be balanced by the structural and ideological cathartic effects of the cultural revolution. Indeed, only “the complete victory of Marxist-Leninist ideology because of the cultural revolution led by the party armed historians in our country with the solid theoretical tools without which significant contemporary quantitative accumulations would not be creatively capitalized upon.”⁵⁰ Science could not be separated from ideological transformation. The process of normalizing the epistemic community (through debate, reviews, original research, thematic expansion) did not, according to one of the most important comrade-scholars, Iorgu Iordan, mean “taking liberties toward the ideological and political facets”⁵¹ of scholarship. The renewed focus on *partiinost* in history-production coincided with a re-opening of the question of the correct proportion of cadres and composition of personnel within higher-education and scientific research and with a discourse of heightened vigilance toward and struggle against bourgeois and revisionist influences. If in 1956, the DPC blamed members of the historical front for not understanding that “ideological knowledge must

⁴⁹ A. Oțetea, „Însemnătatea istorică a Unirii”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 1, an XII, 1959, p. 22. Oțetea used Stalin’s definition of the nation: a stable historically developed community of language, territory, economy and of psychic life expressed in cultural unity. I will return to this article, for it should be situated in the context of continuous and increasingly insistent talk about the nation from the first half of the sixties. For the moment, I use it only to show the limits set in the late fifties for employing the nation in historical writing.

⁵⁰ „Pentru aplicarea consecventă a teoriei marxist-leniniste în cercetările istorice”, *Ibidem*, p. 20.

⁵¹ “Stenograma Consfăturii din zilele 30-31 mai 1958”, *Ibidem*, f. 56.

be combined with studying archival documents for finding historical truth”⁵², in 1958 the same party institution argued *not the contrary*, but warned that the very quality of ‘scientificity’ depended on the method derived from the dominant ideology. To quote one historian, “[our] ideological orientation brought about fundamental modifications to the very structure of the discipline.”⁵³

However, the last two years of the decade were not a re-staging of the purges of its first years. The overall call for mobilization for the purpose of maintain ideological purity on the historical front was doubled by party directives stressing the importance for the Academy’s various institutes to focus on ‘fundamental research’. The RWP called for the production of “essential thematic works” (*lucrări tematice fundamentale*) that “will comprise topics of synthesis and generalization at the level of modern world science. In this way, these publications will contribute directly to the development of science and to the building of socialism in our country.”⁵⁴ The corollary of such commitment to fostering socialist science was that scientific cadres remained valuable for the historical front *in spite* of their ideological misgivings. The Council of Ministers did issue in 1957 its decision no. 1049 that ignited a campaign of purge at the level of higher-education, particularly among the student body and the lower ranks of the didactic personnel. But, at the level of the Academy, “valuable specialists, though politically

⁵² „Referat privind analiza activitatii Institutului de Istorie din Bucuresti”, 19 aprilie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, 9/1956, ff. 113-114.

⁵³ Ion Donat at a meeting of the Academy’s History Institute in Bucharest see „Ședința de analiză a muncii științifice pe anul 1954 la Institutul de istorie din București al Academiei RPR”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, II, an 8, martie-aprilie 1955, p. 87.

⁵⁴ „Referat asupra unor probleme ale cercetării științifice din cadrul Academiei RPR”, 29 septembrie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.3/1958, ff. 157-166 and „Informare cu privire la unele probleme ale Editurii Academiei RPR”, 8 decembrie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.3/1958, f. 208.

inadequate have largely maintained their jobs.”⁵⁵ The fate of those considered “top scientists, unfit from a political point of view, but with excellent results in their research activity” was to be decided by the Presidium of the Academy on case to case basis. The list made for the History Subsection (with its institutes) included Ion Nestor, David Prodan, Vladimir Dumitrescu, Nicolaescu Plopsor; P. P. Panaitescu, Ion Donat, Nicolae Lascu. Despite administrative sanctions, they were allowed to continue their activity, maintained the right of publication, and some of them figured among the authors of the national history treatise. The point that needs to be made here is that by 1958, ideological offensive was not anymore a zero-sum game. As we shall see in the last section of this chapter it had a prophylactic function in the sense of disciplining the manner of scientific production rather than of purging the academic community.

This new situation can also explain the post-1958 personnel dynamics at *Studii*. Andrei Oțetea along with two of his collaborators, Eliza Campus and Nicolae Fotino, were publicly criticized by Leonte Răutu in May 1958 for errors in their writings and positions taken during public discussions. Răutu accused them of inability, after fourteen years of building socialism, to adjust to the requirements of the new social order. Oțetea was guilty of nourishing reactionary thinking on the historical front, therefore hindering the development of socialist consciousness both among his peers and within the general public:

We understand the difficulties experienced by old historians in the process of moving away from the old way of seeing things to the new one. We consider that it is necessary to be patient with them in order to make sure that this transition takes place under normal circumstances. [...] Nevertheless, I am convinced that comrade Oțetea's assessment [of the current problems of history-production] are his own and that they are not merely suggestions he took on from the Party Institute [...] Have the past fourteen year been in vain? Haven't they created the necessary political and ideological scaffold for a founded analysis of the works of the old historians and for the critical evaluation of what is erroneous

⁵⁵ „Referat privind unele măsuri luate în acest an pentru îmbunătățirea politicii de cadre la Academia RPR”, 22 septembrie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.3/1958, ff. 147-149.

in their work? There are few ideological fields where the struggle over ideas is as strong as in history. From this point of view, we cannot say that our historians have reached a satisfactory level.⁵⁶

Even if we are to leave aside the general ideological revivalism⁵⁷ in the country, it seems that Răutu was not too fond of Oțetea's prominence on the historical front. In his autobiographical account, Țugui claims that Răutu was very angry when he realized that he was not consulted regarding Oțetea's appointment as director of the Academy's History Institute and editor-in-chief at *Studii*. Țugui, the head of the Culture and Science Section at the time, maintains that Răutu's bypassing was possible because the nomination came from the Academy's Presidium and Secretariat after the vote of the members of the Historical Section.⁵⁸ This scenario is plausible only to a limited extent. What is more likely to have happened was that Răutu grudgingly accepted the change, but when the time was right he made sure to have things under control.

One issue that stands out in the party criticism formulated against historians is that most of it came before the RWP Central Committee Plenum of June 9-13, 1958. The DPC reports about the subsequent disciplinary measures taken against historians make reference to the documents of this Plenum. Indeed, latter was a continuation of the June-July 1957 Plenum that brought the brunt of the attacks against the Chișinevschi-Constantinescu faction by Gheorghiu-Dej and his allies.⁵⁹ As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the party used the context of anti-de-

⁵⁶ "Stenograma consfăturii din zilele de 30-31 mai 1958", ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no. 6/1958 in Tismaneanu and Vasile, *Ibidem*, pp. 364-366.

⁵⁷ David Priestland distinguished within Bolshevism between "a voluntaristic, or 'charismatic' approach to politics and economics" - 'revivalist'; and, "a more scientific, Weberian 'rational' attitude" - 'technicist'. He then took his argument further and branched his typology to subspecies of each of these two categories. However, for our purposes, what is important is that these two tendencies, despite being in tension, are not mutually exclusive. See David Priestland, *Stalinism and the Politics of Mobilization. Ideas, Power, and Terror in Inter-War Russia* (Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).

⁵⁸ Țugui, *Ibidem*, p. 60.

⁵⁹ V. Tismaneanu argued that "the Plenum of the Central Committee of the RWP held on June 28-29 and July 1-3, 1957, played a crucial role in the restructuring of the party's politburo and the expulsion of the Chișinevschi-Constantinescu 'factionalist group'. According to the official version, it was the factionalists' intention to hamper the healthy course embarked on by the party. [...] Simply put, the June 1957 plenum was Dej's response to minimal,

Stalinization maneuvering against this so-called antiparty faction in order to also discipline the historical front. The June 1958 plenum mostly concerned the Doncea-Șandru faction and, as we saw in the analysis of Roller's demise, it touched upon issues related to party history: who was the real leader of the 1933 railway workers' strike. The RWP simply appended to this crisis in self-representation the confrontations from the realm of national history.⁶⁰

The accusations against Oțetea, Fotino, Campus, and on other occasions against Maciu, Câmpina, M. Ionescu, G. Haupt reflected older quarrels of the epistemic community. Their errors were related to opinions expressed about the role of the bourgeoisie in Romanian's modern history, particularly in what concerned the debates around the interpretation of the country's participation in the First World War and of the unification of 1918. All these historians maintained that despite the fact that Romania was allied with imperialist powers, the main reason for its participation in the conflict was just, for the main goal was completing the unification of the Romanian people. These disagreements did not appear in 1958; the 'resolution' reached by the DPC that year was merely the final point of a protracted affair that originated in the clashes between Oțetea, Maciu, and, initially, Cheresteșiu, Roller, Constantinescu-Iași, and V Liveanu about the periodization of modern and contemporary Romanian history. To make a long story short, the first group focused on the importance of the unification of 1918, while the second downgraded it as they emphasized the centrality of the 'October Revolution'.

In the end, Constantinescu-Iași and Roller will have the last word with the caveat that the new thesis on the subject also underlined the progressiveness of Transylvania's unification with Romania (thus allowing the possibility for further revision). By 1958, the first group was accused

but real, attempts by two of his associates to engage in moderate de-Stalinization in the aftermath of Khrushchev's secret speech." Vladimir Tismaneanu, *Stalinism for All Season...*, p. 157.

⁶⁰ For the transcripts of both plenums see Alina Tudor and Dan Cătănuș (eds.), *O destalinizare ratată...* and *Amurgul ilegalităților....*

of “trying to rehabilitate the Romanian bourgeoisie.” In contrast to the other group of historians black-listed in 1958, Oțetea, Maciu, Ionescu, Fotino, Câmpina, and Campus were party members. Therefore sanctions against them were primarily on this realm. Oțetea was only reprehended; Câmpina and Maciu received a vote of censure; Campus and Fotino were given a vote of censure with a warning; Ionescu was excluded from the party. In this context, the first three continued their activity with no other serious repercussions with the exception of a limitation of their institutional influence. Campus and Fotino had to deal for a couple of years with difficulties in being able to publish their work. Ionescu, however, was made an example of. At the time, he was secretary of the party organization at the history subsection of the Academy too.⁶¹ He seems to have been punished harsher for not exercising his party leadership position (i.e., lack of vigilance) in imposing the correct standpoint on the contested subjects. He will be reintegrated at the History Institute in Bucharest only in 1964. Overall, however, the party’s punitive measures did not lead to the purge of most of those who were targeted by them. This campaign was rather a means to reassert control over critical junctures of the historical front, to make sure that loyalty of historians who members of the party remained first to it and second to the profession.

The second issue of *Studii* in 1958 introduced a new editorial board: P. Constantinescu-Iași was editor-in-chief; E. Stănescu was deputy editor; and, Boris Bălțeanu secretary of the board. Oțetea’s replacement with Constantinescu-Iași along with the elimination from the board of Gh. Haupt (an ‘objective change’ considering his immigration), Matei Ionescu, and Nicolae Fotino (who maintained his job at the institute) brought *Studii* closer to the party-line. Most

⁶¹ „Informare privind prelucrarea plenarei CC al PMR din 9-13 iunie a.c. în organizațiile de bază din instituțiile de învățământ superior, știință, artă și cultură”, 24 decembrie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.3/1958, ff. 236-240.

importantly, it was controlled by a historian-censor (Constantinescu-Iași) along with one of Daicoviciu's henchmen, V. Cheresteșiu, and by a historian affiliated with the Party History Institute (Gheorghe Matei). The renewed revivalism of the journal was proven by the editorial of the 3rd issue (1958): "it [*Studii*] had to strengthen and deepen the combative-ideological character of the published material. It did not suffice to publish scientific work [...] it must also publish as many ideological texts as possible."⁶² The resolution reached at *Studii* is strikingly similar to the ruling given at *Voprosy istorii*. In the Soviet case, the junior editor-in-chief, Burzhdalov, was fired (and temporarily demoted from all offices he held). Pankratova was reprimanded by the party (the whole affair led to her untimely death). The new editorial board published an assessment of its predecessors' errors. It stated that: "the editorial board will pay particular attention to resolutely restoring the principles of the Party allegiance in the evaluation of historical phenomena [...] It will wage an adamant struggle against distortions of the historical process, against relapses into bourgeois ideology in historiography, and for the purity of Marxist-Leninist theory."⁶³ It seems indeed that the DPC did have a template to follow for reasserting the dialectical nature of history production in Romania. The highly valued specialists were maintained, but their work would materialize under conditions of cultural revolution as part and parcel of the building of socialism.

C. The Academy and Higher Education: Efficiency and Control

The evolution of *Studii* was an example of the tumult that the entire scientific field was experiencing between 1958 and 1960. In these years, the RWP accelerated its socialist offensive

⁶² *Studii*, no.3, 1958, p. 125. Also see Constantiniu, *Ibidem*, pp. 189-195, Mihalache, *Ibidem*, p. 137.

⁶³ "Statement of *Voprosy istorii*," in Marin Pundeff (ed.), *History in the U.S.S.R. Selected Readings* (San Francisco: Chandler Publishing Company, 1967), p. 244.

at the level of both the Academy and of higher-education. The University was the arena where the impact of communist ‘democratizing’ policies was most strongly felt. The Council of Ministers issued in 1957 a decree that imposed a 70-75% quota of students with peasant or working-class origins for the admissions to higher education in the following academic years. By January 30, 1961, the DPC declared that it already reached the level of 70%.⁶⁴ This socialist offensive against universities affected the professorial body as well. Those teaching cadres who were deemed to spread “reactionary, antiscientific views” among the students faced the likely possibility of being fired or expelled. Sons of “former exploiters, of kulaks, priests, lawyers” were also expelled along with individuals that did not have the necessary professional and scientific training. P. Țugui, the head of the Section of Culture and Science, presented in 1958 the categories of teaching cadres who were liable for exclusion from higher-education: “those who expressed openly negative views about our regime of popular democracy; those who were sentenced on political grounds or who were arrested for activities against our regime; former members of the Iron Guard or individuals who were related in some way or another with this movement; and, those who cause trouble for us by advocating antiscientific, idealist theories.”⁶⁵

The evaluation of these cadres was done by special committees created at the level of each university center that were subordinated to the regional RWP bureaus. Their conclusions were verified by a national commission made up of the head of the Higher Education Department within the Ministry of Education, the chief of the Central Committee’s Section for Science and Culture, and the President of the Cultural and Scientific Workers’ Trade Union. The Academy’s Presidium created eight such committees: five for the institutes and central

⁶⁴ “Informare privind desfășurarea adunărilor generale de alegeri ale organizațiilor de partid din instituțiile de învățământ superior”, 30 ianuarie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.5/1961, f.11.

⁶⁵ Pavel Țugui, „Referat privind măsuri de îmbunătățirea situației de cadre din învățământul superior”, 25 iulie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.3/1958, f. 129

administration in Bucharest, three for the Academy's sectors in Cluj, Iasi and Timisoara. Their members were academicians, researchers and other employees. This nation-wide evaluation actually had two objectives: first, to create an inventory of all the cadres in higher-education; second, on the basis of the information in this inventory, to advice for further punitive measures on individual cases.

The impact of these committees' evaluations can be quantified if we look at the statistics for the evolution teaching personnel between 1957 and 1959. During almost two academic years, out of a total of 8,227 cadres in higher education, 562 were fired (6.8%) of which 179 were transferred to other institutions, while 21 lost their jobs because their departments and sections were disbanded. From this larger group, only 362 cadres working full time were fired based on political criteria. From them, 23 were professors, 28 associate professors, 58 lecturers and assistants. Furthermore, another 179 cadres were dismissed from the higher-education system because of the fact that they held other employment positions, mostly in research. One last statistic that stands out is that 34 professors, labeled by the DPC as either Iron Guardists or former supporters of A. C. Cuza's fascist party, were maintained in universities because of professional value.⁶⁶

⁶⁶ These numbers however need to be compared with the overall totals of teaching cadres eliminated from higher-education: 28 professors, 85 associate professors, 120 lecturers, 222 assistants and 107 tutors. The differences lay in the fact that the campaign for ideological vigilance was couple with one of eliminating the cadres who were considered unprepared from a professional point of view. See "Informație cu privire la compoziția social-politică a cadrelor didactice din învățământul superior", ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no. 10/1960, f.23 and „Informație cu privire la compoziția social-politică a cadrelor didactice din învățământul superior”, 24 aprilie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.4/1959, ff. 61-65. In 1959, those who, after August 23, 1944 were sentenced on political grounds or those who were labeled "enemies of the people" or "agents of reaction" were banned either from taking the admittance exam to University or from apply for a job at research institutes. See "Referat privind recrutarea, selecționarea, promovarea și asigurarea stabilității cadrelor de specialiști din unitățile de cercetare științifice ale Academiei RPR, ministerelor și instituțiilor centrale de stat", 24 octombrie and "Informare cu privire la admiterea și menținerea în instituțiile de învățământ superior a fiilor de exploatare, condamnați politic, transfugi, etc" ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no. 29/1959, f.69 and ff. 181-182.

The purges had two fundamental functions: the revolutionary purification of higher education by means of proletarianization; and, the strengthening of the position and leverage of the party organizations affiliated to either University departments or with the Academy. What stands out is the fact that those most affected were the young cadres, the members of the new generation who supposedly had to represent the red academic elite, to show the socialist consciousness necessary for the fulfillment of the cultural revolution. Party documents point to the unsatisfactory social composition of the latter group: sons of workers were only 17.4%, of peasants 18.5%, that is a total of 35%. To make matters worse, within the ranks of teaching cadres (professors and assistant professors) this percentage amounted only to 25.3. On the basis of such statistics, DPC documents from 1957 to 1960 constantly warned about the danger of petit-bourgeois mentality within the higher-education cadres, about the possibility of the entrenchment of values and theories alien to socialist culture and science.⁶⁷

The 1957-1959 campaign of changing the profile of higher education through revolutionary vigilance and ‘democratization’ of admissions and employment did impact upon the historical front. Some of the most high-profile Romanian contemporary historians have strong memories of those years. Dan Berindei and Florin Constantinu were reprimanded on party line, but they continued their work at the Academy’s Institute and in the collectives of the national history treatise. Al. Zub, however, was arrested in 1957 (accused of nationalist attitude because of his commemorative speech at the 500-year anniversary of Ștefan cel Mare’s enthronement). He was released and reintegrated in research in 1963.⁶⁸ Another famous case was Răzvan

⁶⁷ “Referat cu privire la unele măsuri de îmbunătățire a activității Academiei RPR”, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no. 29/159, f. 163.

⁶⁸ On the case of Al. Zub and the contents of his actual speech at the anniversary organized at the Putna Monastery see Gheorghe Firca, “Historia, magistra vitae 1957: o altă aniversare”, *Revista* 22, September 7, 2005. Zub’s case is rather strange, because the manifestation he participated in and spoke to was considered a success even by the DAP,

Theodorescu who was expelled in 1959 from the University. He returned to the Institute of Art History in 1963. What needs to be emphasized though is that most of the attacks against the young researchers affiliated to the Academy's institutes of history (Bucharest, Cluj, or Iași) or to the University's history departments were also intended as warnings to their mentors. Dan Berindei, Răzvan Theodorescu, and Nicolae Tanașoca were reprimanded in the context of public attack against D. M. Pippidi, M. Berza, and Ion Nestor (candidate member of the Academy). The three professors initially refused to sign a letter of support for Manolis Glezos, an imprisoned Greek communist. They soon changed their attitude; the letter of support was published in *Contemporanul* signed by them along with A. Oțetea, and Emil Condurachi.⁶⁹

Two additional solutions were found for strengthening *partiinost* both in higher education and research institutes: the creation of circles of ideological learning where attendance was compulsory (for all component bodies of universities and the Academy); and, the strengthening of the activity of party organizations at the level of research institutes and university departments. The circles of ideology created by decision of the Ministry of Education and Culture taught cadres in higher education and research “dialectical and historical materialism, political economy, and several specific classes that analyzed fundamental theses of Marxism-

for example “Informare cu privire la manifestările ce au avut loc cu ocazia aniversării a 500 de ani de la urcarea pe tron a lui Ștefan cel Mare”, 8 mai, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no. 18-1957, ff. 59-60. This document also contains the information that the lecture, which Barbu Cămpina was supposed to present at the Academy special session, did not fit into the program anymore (allegedly for reasons of time, but Cămpina was by no means a historian that had many good things to say about Ștefan cel Mare's reign). The sole historian to omagiate the Moldavian voievod was I. Nestor. At the same time, the Academy published the anniversary volume *Ștefan cel mare – 500 de ani de la înscăunarea sa ca Domn l Moldovei* (București: Editura de Stat pentru Imprimante și Publicații, 1957). Its bibliography listed all the works on the topic by ‘bourgeois’ historians such as Gh I Brătianu, Th. Capidan, C Giurescu, C.C. Giurescu, Vasile Grecu, Ioan Lupaș, Alex. Lapedatu, etc (Țugu, *Ibidem*, p. 79). So, Zub's arrest for nationalist propaganda at the voievod's anniversary stands out because the times were quite favorable for a national interpretation of Stephen the Great's rule. Most likely he got such a raw deal also because he didn't have an influential historian/academician to back him up. See Al. Zub, “Un program de redresare națională la Iași”, pp. 748-758 and Dumitru Vacariu, „Sărbătorirea, în anul 1957, la Iași și Putna, a 500 de ani de la urcarea pe tronul Moldovei a lui Ștefan cel Mare și Sfânt și urmările aceluia eveniment”, pp. 759-763 in *Anii 1954-1960. Fluxurile și refluxurile stalinismului*. Analele Sihet 8 (București: Fundația Academia Civică, 2000).

⁶⁹ For a detailed account of the affair see Opriș, *Ibidem*, vol. I, esp. p. 520 and 538; vol. II, esp. p. 485.

Leninism as applied to particular branches of science. The ideological education of the university and research cadres is directly coordinated by party organizations.” In 1959, throughout the country there were 190 such circles that comprised 5800 teaching cadres of which 1500 were professors and assistant professors and 4300 lecturers, assistants, and tutors. In addition, close to 400 cadres were identified as taking evening classes (*univeristate serală*) of Marxism-Leninism. Putting all this data together, around 92% of the cadres (6390 individuals of a total of 6951) in higher-education were enrolled in some form or another into ideological learning.⁷⁰ The immediate conclusion to this situation is that the RWP, on its road to cultural revolution, was not just committed to excising alien elements from the body of educators of socialist intelligentsia. It also subjected them to an extensive pedagogical project. With the scientific field expanding rapidly as the building of socialism progressed, the RWP created the pedagogical framework for the ideologically correct socialization of the regime’s epistemic elite.

Another important factor that significantly increased the control of the party over the activity of universities, but particularly of that of the Academy, was the change in these institutions’ subordination to regional party organizations. One of the dominant and recurring complaints of the DPC reports concerning the Academy’s institutes was the weakness and inactivity of the party organization combined with the informal isolation of party members in research collectives.⁷¹ The creation of the Academy’s party committee in 1956 was the result of an attempt to synchronize “the institution’s administrative centralization with that of party

⁷⁰ „Informare privind desfășurarea învățământului ideologic în rândul cadrelor didactice din învățământul superior”, 25 februarie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.12/1959, ff. 62-73.

⁷¹ “Notă informativă privind unele aspecte ale activității Academiei RPR”, 28 aprilie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no. 64-1955, f.14.

work.”⁷² The party committee of the Academy had fourteen members of which three were academicians (Al Graur – its president, who by that time was also director of the Academy’s Publishing House; V Malinschi – from 1959 first deputy general secretary of the Academy; and, S. Stoilov) and twelve were “young researchers highly valued for their work at their respective institutes.” The scientific profile of most of the party committee’s members allowed for this body’s control over and intervention into the scientific plans of the various sections of the Academy. In 1957, DPC documents established as its objective the setting up of a framework for a permanent presence of the committee’s secretariat at the meetings of the Academy’s presidium.⁷³ By 1961, this goal had been achieved.

In this context, however, between 1956 and 1958, the party organization of the Academy’s Institute of History was heavily criticized. Historians such as G. Haupt, N. Fotino, and M Ionescu were blamed for the perceived inability to complete their work plans. The conflict between this group and Roller hindered scientific activity at the institute and it weakened party control over it because of an authority vacuum. Starting with 1959, with the four historians basically out of the power struggle game, the Institute’s party organization reasserted its control. Following a practice blossoming at the Academy’s institutes, historians created collectives of specialists – members and non-party members – to analyze the research plans. The conclusions of these commissions were debated “in free access party meetings with the institute’s management present.” This way, the party organization “reached the political decisions

⁷² „Referat asupra constituirii unui comitet de partid care să cuprindă unitățile din București ale Academiei RPR”, 2 februarie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.20/1956, f. 2.

⁷³ „Munca de partid în institutele de științe sociale”, 23 februarie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.13/1957, ff. 3-9.

necessary for helping researchers with fulfilling their tasks within the planned timeframes.”⁷⁴ At the same time, the secretary of the party organization (Tr. Lungu) participated at the meetings of the Institute’s scientific council.

The RWP did not stop at establishing a more efficient system of party control over the planning of science *only within* the Academy and its institutes. A larger framework was required, one that relied on specialized and proficient supervision of the various epistemic fields. As early as 1954, documents of the CC’s Department for Agitation and Propaganda signaled that “Bucharest district committees ,V.I. Lenin’ and ,I.V. Stalin’, which have under supervision most of the [Academy’s] institutes, do not have qualified activists who could deal with the party organizations at these institutes.”⁷⁵ In similar fashion, but in 1961, a DPC document stressed the persistence of these problems of specialized supervision and guidance at the level “I. V. Stalin” district party committee to which the Academy belonged. Just like in 1954, the district committee suffered from a dearth of specialized personnel able to control the content of the research undergone at the Academy. In order to fix this problem, it was decided that the Academy’s party organization will be unified with the University’s and both will be subordinated to the Bucharest municipal part committee. The new organization was named the Party Committee of Institutes of Higher Education and of Scientific Research (PCIHERS).

One of the main tasks of the municipal committee was to instruct the members of the newly created organization in focusing upon political and ideological education of scientists. Moreover, the secretary of the PCIHERS would also be the deputy secretary of the Bucharest municipal party committee. Such an overlap of leadership would create the circumstance for

⁷⁴ „Notă cu privire la conținutul muncii de partid și sindicale în institutele de cercetări ale Academiei RPR”, 22 martie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.15/1961, ff. 55-60.

⁷⁵ „Referat cu privire la munca organizațiilor de partid din institutelor de învățământ superior și din institutele de cercetări științifice”, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, 28 octombrie, 17/1954, f. 51.

more “direct and swifter resolution to problems that appear in the activity of party organizations of the Academy’s institutes.”⁷⁶ This institutional development along the path of increased efficiency of party planned science did have an additional twist. A year after the creation of the PCIHESR, Traian Dudaș, its secretary, was severely criticized for lack of vigilance, self-sufficiency, and heavy-handedness in dealing with its subordinates and the representatives of the Academy. Dudaș was the same person who presided, under the guidance of Florin Dănălache, the secretary of the Bucharest municipal committee, over the purges from 1958 and 1959 within higher-education and the research institutes.⁷⁷

In 1962, the very principles which the former University party committee, now PCIHESR, acted upon in the previous years were denounced. The representatives of the CC’s Sector for Science and Culture considered that Dudaș was going beyond his responsibilities because “leadership cadres of the research institutes are called upon for verification at the University party committee” and they are convinced that “their fate depends on its decisions which leads to unprincipled situations.” Therefore, the committee showed “sectarian, rigid behavior toward prestigious professors and scientists who this way moved away from the party. The bureau of the party committee does not have any patience in working with these people, it frivolously appeals to sanctions.” The same report recommended as possible solutions to these difficulties a more emphatic subordination of the PCIHESR to the municipal party committee

⁷⁶ “Referat cu privire la îmbunătățirea activității comitetului de partid al Academiei RPR și a organizațiilor de partid din instituțiile de cercetări științifice departamentale”, 23 octombrie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.5/1961, ff. 97-99.

⁷⁷ Dudaș was named secretary of the University Party Committee in December 1958. About Danalache see Vladimir Tismaneanu, “Între servilism și fanatism. Reflecții pe marginea carierei politice a lui Florin Dănălache,” in *Arheologia Terorii*, pp. 334-339 or Pavel Țugui, “Dosarul studentului Manolescu: povestea unei exmatriculări”, *Revista 22*, anul XIV, no. 760, 30 septembrie-6 octombrie 2004.

and, with new intra-party elections approaching, the selection within the leadership of elder cadres, whose activity was appreciated among specialists.⁷⁸

Another mechanism of simultaneously strengthening *partiinost* and the planification of science was the creation of an umbrella institution which purpose would be drafting feasible production plans expressive of the priorities set up by the party for various sciences. The first step on this path was the creation of two commissions (in 1960 and 1959), made up of the most important comrade-academicians. They were given the task to evaluate both the institutional and research activity of the Academy and to provide recommendations for its improvement. The two commissions decided to create the Council for the Orientation, Guidance, and Coordination of Research in the RPR (COGCR). It was supposed to coordinate smaller committees (which included ministerial representatives) that supervised the work in the corresponding research branches.⁷⁹ The creation of the COGCR also brought about the reorganization of some institutes and sections of the Academy. Ilie Murgulescu, Athanasie Joja, and Iorgu Iordan expressed their reticence in accepting this transformation. But, as Joja noticed: “whether we like it or not the situation is the following: there is a document that forces the Academy and the Ministers into a new reorganization. The Academy’s reorganization is just a matter of time and it ultimately goes beyond us. A final decision will most likely be taken by a higher authority.”⁸⁰ The Academy lost the limited autonomy it had in setting its sections’ yearly research plans. In the aftermath of the 1955 changes in the Academy’s statutes, they were most of the time decided by each section

⁷⁸ „Principalele concluzii și propuneri ale brigăzii CC al PMR în urma controlului efectuat asupra muncii de partid din instituțiile de învățământ superior din București”, 28 decembrie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.17/1962, ff. 41-75.

⁷⁹ “Referat cu privire la unele măsuri de îmbunătățire a activității Academiei RPR”, *Ibidem*.

⁸⁰ “Informare privind unele aspecte din activitatea Academiei RPR”, 16 mai, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no. 2/1960, f. 95.

individually under the supervision of its president, who was also a vice-president of the Academy.

The creation of the COGCR was premised by earlier DPC reports that indicated the party's dissatisfaction with the coordination of the planned science at the Academy level. For example, at a meeting with academicians from the fields of mathematics, chemistry, physics, and technical sciences, DPC representatives concluded that "regarding the management of research, the Academy does not even manage to fulfill this task at the level of its own institutes." The Soviet Union was given as positive example: a special commission attached to the State Planning Commission was charged with this executive function.⁸¹ Another document, from 1959, offered a more complete picture of the party's opinion about the status of planning on the scientific realm:

The RPR Academy was entrusted with ensuring the correct orientation of all scientific work in our country in order for the most important problems presupposed by the building of socialism to be solved, and with the coordination of all efforts made concerning this matter. In reality, though, the Academy proved that it was not able to live up to such a high task. The cooperation between the RPR Academy, the State Planning Committee, and the ministries does not exist. The ministries have been reluctant to send to the Academy for validation their plans of scientific research. [...] In the past years, the RPR Academy has been overwhelmed by the important tasks that it was given.⁸²

According to the same DPC report, the solution was two-folded. On the one hand, attached to the council of Ministers, a Council for the guidance and management of scientific research in the RPR was necessary. This council would be headed by one of the vice-presidents of the Council of Ministers and it would have three vice-presidents (The Academy's president, the president of the State Planning Committee, and the Minister of Education and Culture). This body was just

⁸¹ „Notă asupra ședinței din 11 martie 1958 a conducerii Secției Știință și cultură cu academicieni și membri corespondenți ai Academiei RPR, membri de partid, din domeniile matematicii, fizicii, chimiei și științelor tehnice”, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.3/1958, f. 102.

⁸² „Referat privind unele probleme ale activității de cercetare științifică din RPR”, 7 aprilie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.12/1959, ff. 160-161.

another version of the COGCR, the result of the communist regime's focus on bringing scientific production closer to its 'developmental tasks' (Jowitt), on increasing its contribution to "the development of economy and culture, to the safeguarding of the wellbeing of the people." This proposal of change within the framework of guidance, management, and control was accompanied by a proposal for "strengthening the Academy's leadership".⁸³ Tr. Săvulescu and C. I. Parhon were nominated honorary presidents of the Academy, while I. Murgulescu would become acting president. This interregnum will last until 1963, the year when Murgulescu will officially become sole president of the Academy.

It should be noted, however, that earlier invocations of the Soviet model were not a coincidence. The project of the COGCR was formulated at the same time as the State Committee of the Council of Ministers for the Coordination of Scientific Research was created in the USSR.⁸⁴ However, a DPC report from 1963 warned that the organizational framework projected in 1958-1960 was yet to materialize. The Romanian version of the Soviet State Committee had not officially come into being. Moreover, a country-wide plan that could set "the main coordinates of scientific activity based on a thematic analysis of tendencies in the development of science, of the profound transformations that could take place in science and technology, of the existing possibilities and imperious necessities in our country"⁸⁵ did not exist. As we shall

⁸³ *Ibidem*, f. 165.

⁸⁴ This body was officially founded in the Soviet Union in 1961. According to A. Vucinich, its task was that "of supervising the national organization of major research projects, as stated in official government documents, as of coordinating the work of such systems of scientific institutions as the Soviet Academy of Sciences, the republic academies of sciences, sectoral research units, and institutions of higher education." See Alexander Vucinich, *Empire of Knowledge: the Academy of Sciences of the USSR (1917-1970)* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), p. 302-303.

⁸⁵ „Referat cu privire la activitatea de cercetare științifică”, 24 decembrie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.9/1963, ff. 80-81. These desiderata were in line with Soviet development in the field of planned science. According to Vucinich, the State Committee's main function was to "assist the government in drawing up and implementing plans for a unified national science policy." The State Committee in the Soviet Union changed its name in 1965 into the State Committee of the Council of Ministers for Science and technology, another

see, this renewed centralization of the scientific production will materialize in the mid-1960s, but under significantly different circumstances. What in 1959 was projected to be a country-wide meeting of all scientific workers gathered with the purpose of debating the rationalization of the planning of knowledge, will take the form, in 1964, of a gathering in support of the new RWP line toward increased independence from the “Moscow Center”. It will be the turning point in the consecration of *national* science under communism in Romania. In other words, the RPW’s projects to centralize, streamline, and control will be indigenized as a form of cultural emancipation and developmental self-centeredness.

Nevertheless, what should not be lost from this story is the fact that, because of the changes implemented from 1958 until early sixties, science in Romania became “all party”, before it officially turned national. Party-state institutional control of the Academy and higher-education was heightened and made more efficient. Ideological education was generalized across the entire scientific field. In addition, to enhance and stabilize co-option, membership into the party from the ranks of the scholarly community was encouraged and the process itself was accelerated. In 1959, of 212 cadres that held various leadership positions (rectors, deans, etc) within higher-education already 40% were considered to have ‘healthy’ social background (sons of workers or peasants) and 79.7% were party members.⁸⁶ In 1960, at a total of 7665 members of the teaching personnel in universities 2200 cadres were party members or candidates of which 760 were professors or associate professors. Overall, around 60% of the individuals associated to

institutional ‘invention’ of the Moscow Center that will be emulated by the RWP. See A. Vucinich, *Empire of Knowledge*, p. 304.

⁸⁶ „Informație cu privire la compoziția social-politică a cadrelor didactice din învățământul superior”, *Ibidem*, f. 62.

higher institutional bodies within higher-education were members or candidates to the party.⁸⁷

This data shows that, by the beginning of the 1960s, the party was already reaping the benefits of its double policy of ‘democratization’ and co-option in universities. The cultural revolution resulted either in inclusionary policies among the ‘old’ professorial body or in its turnover through the promotion of red specialists, the cadres of the post-1948 academic system.

At the level of the Academy, the situation was less satisfactory. For example, as late as 1963, at the Cluj section of the Academy, of a 32 academicians only seven were party members.⁸⁸ However, before the next round of nominations at the Academy in 1963, new regulations were advanced with the purpose of allowing for the promotion of younger standing academicians to full members of the Academy. At the same time, the standing members were supposed to be re-elected every 4 years, thus allowing the party to make this title conditional. Furthermore, jobs such as head of section or sector of the Academy would be filled in on the basis of examination. Within the examining commissions representatives of the party and trade union organizations figured prominently.⁸⁹ Simultaneously, following the pattern of the institution’s 1948 transformation, the DPC recommended that management positions at the level of the Academy to be strengthened with the promotion of cadres from the ‘technical’ sciences. These members would be co-opted in the Presidium, despite their junior status, for they were going to receive a full status at the next round of elections in the Academy. The system gave the party the possibility to place trusted scientists in the decision-making apparatus of the scientific field, while providing them with a mechanism of future reward upon compliance. Indeed, on the

⁸⁷ „Informație cu privire la compoziția social-politică a cadrelor didactice din învățământul superior”, 27 februarie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.10/1960, f.24

⁸⁸ „Concluziile brigăzilor CC al PMR care au controlat în regiunile Cluj și Banat, munca în rândul intelectualilor (aprilie-noiembrie 1963)”, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.19/1963, ff. 1-35.

⁸⁹ „Referat cu privire la unele măsuri de îmbunătățire a activității Academiei RPR”, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, 29/1959, ff. 162-163.

historical front for example, individuals who became corresponding members in 1963 were those who excelled in the fulfillment of the tasks set up by the RWP in history-production: Mihai Berza, Vasile Maciu, Ștefan Pascu, Constantin S. Nicolaescu-Plopsor, Dionisie M. Pippidi.⁹⁰ No historian was elected full member, but this new cohort of standing ones were by now proven ‘socialist scientists’ through their contribution at the writing of the national history treatise and through their activity in the administration of the epistemic community.

The long term impact of exclusionary policies from 1958 to 1960 on the personnel within the historical front was rather limited. The polycentric profile of the field combined with the fact that the members of the epistemic community were deeply involved in fundamental projects (the treatise, the volumes on the history of Transylvania, the new editions of documents about various periods of Romania’s history) did not allow for a high turnover rate within the profession. However, the institutional changes did bring about the re-affirmation of *partiinost* in history, increasing the degree of control over the front. Its proven commitment to fulfilling the tasks of the party created the premises of a sort of social contract between historians and the party. Its essence lay on the planning of history-production on the basis of overlapping or mutually accommodating agendas. Instead of the appearance of a new generation, defined by its origin in the socialist offensive of 1958-1960, the historical front developed on the basis of the power agents who came on the scene upon Roller’s demise. Historians such as Oțetea, Daicoviciu, Condurachi, Berza, Stănescu, Cheresteșiu, Pippidi, V. Popescu will dominate the profession until early 1970s, when the generation of their pupils took over.⁹¹ A party document from October

⁹⁰ Dorina Russu, *Ibidem*, p. 358.

⁹¹ These two simultaneously evolving layers (mentor-mentored) of the historical front (e.g., Daicoviciu and Pascu; Oțetea and Papacostea, Berza and Ștefănescu, Maciu and Scurtu, etc.) appear clearly from the distribution of the professorial staff of the History Departments from the universities in Bucharest, Cluj and Iasi by the end of the

1961 admitted the failure of the push to break the historians' ranks. Its assessment of the state of affairs was the following:

The general tendency in the departments of history is to emphasize ancient and medieval history at the expense of modern and contemporary history. This is also happening because the best professors are specialized on 'old' history. [...] The departments of history have the smallest number of young cadres. For example, at the University of Bucharest, the department of history has 57 teaching cadres (*cadre didactice*) out of which only 7 are assistants and 10 are teaching assistants (*preparatori*); the rest are professors (*cadre de predare*).⁹²

In the research sector the situation was not significantly different. In 1964, a jubilee volume celebrating the marvels of the Romanian cultural revolution noted that the research budget for the historical sciences increased over one hundred times between 1956 and 1960. This was testimony of the effort made by the regime to establish its own national history. At the same time though the number of researchers on the historical front in 1963 (185) was yet to reach the level registered in 1949 (200).⁹³ The representatives of the historical front were very selective with their collaborators, who were fully socialized in their mentors' tradition (their memoirs are an excellent proof in this sense). One can say that, by 1963, the criteria of quality won over that of quantity. As one Czechoslovak delegation learnt, in 1953, during a trip of documentation about the Soviet higher education system: "Ideological and intellectual transformation is a complex, sometimes excruciating process. 'Ideas are not old clothes that one can simply take off and change,' were the exact words of the deputy minister of culture comrade Stoletov."⁹⁴

sixties. See Robert Deutsch, *Istoricii și știința istorică din România, 1944-1969* (Editura Științifică, 1970), pp. 53-55.

⁹² "Informare privind activitatea unor catedre și facultăți din sectorul universitar", 22 noiembrie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no. 5/1961, f. 144.

⁹³ Ilie Murgulescu, "Dezvoltarea învățământului - veriga principală a revoluției culturale în țara noastră" in *Momente ale revoluției culturale din România* (București: Editura Științifică, 1964), p. 47 and p. 50.

⁹⁴ John Connelly, "The Sovietization of Higher Education in the Czech Lands, East Germany, and Poland during the Stalinist Period, 1948-1954," pp. 141-177 in David-Fox and Péteri, *Ibidem*, p. 147.

By mid 1960s, the historical front was the product of a process of hybridization between the dominant role of the party and the increasingly evident national focus history production. Despite the temporizations at the end of the 1950s, the main coordinates of the agenda pushed by *Studii*'s editorial board led by Oțetea remained in place across the *entire* historical front: the recuperation of tradition and the gradual reconstruction of a continuous, unitary and self-conscious community across history in the context of a focus on social history, class struggle, and of labeling the masses (i.e. the people) as main actors of History. Furthermore, the process of inclusion was accelerated with the gradual opening of the party to historians and with the crystallization of a system of incentives and rewards for cooperation.

First and foremost, the extent of the investment on the part of the regime in social scientific work was indeed impressive. I have shown already the significant increase in financial support for history-production. In 1959, in social sciences there were 24 research units with 600 cadres. Of the funds allocated for research in “socio-cultural fields” 82% went to the Academy’s subsections and their institutes and only 18% to the ministries. At the end of the year, the historical front counted eight institutions from the existing research units in the social sciences, a sixth of the sector: the History Institute in Bucharest, the Archeology Institute in Bucharest, the Institute of History and Philosophy in Cluj, the Institute of History and Philology in Iasi, the Commission for the study of the formation of the Romanian people and language, the General Committee for the writing of the treatise *Istoria Romîniei* (only for the duration of the project), the Museum of Antiquities in Iasi; the Scientific Commission for historical and artistic

monuments in Bucharest. Four years later, another unit was added, the Institute for South East European Studies.⁹⁵

At the level of micro-management, the regime created a new system of rewards and recognition. One of the main complaints against Roller was that he claimed the work of his associates and that he discriminated against those who worked with him, refusing to nominate some of them for various state awards. The issue of recognition was clarified by 1958 and those who were part of the collectives which wrote the various monographs deemed strategic by the party would receive various official honors. The matter of the copyright was a bit more complex because it was inextricably connected to history-production and individual fulfillment of research plans. In 1957, the Council of Ministers passed decision no. 632/1957 on copyright. Its fundamental flaw was that it did not prescribe any retribution for materials written by historians as part of their plan at the institutes they were working. This situation decreased their interest in engaging into large projects within the plan. Their activity at the institutes would merely amount to sometimes only one yearly research article. Consequently, in 1958, the Academy and the Ministry of Education put forward a modification of decision no. 632 that proposed copyright payment for scientific thematic work as well – that is, books, monographs, textbooks, etc. Moreover, the Academy's periodicals were compelled to have at least 50% of the published material from projects of the various institutes' research plans. The authors of these articles still did not receive any direct payment for them, but they were granted 25% of the copyright as research reward.⁹⁶

⁹⁵ „Referat privind unele probleme ale activității de cercetare științifică din RPR”, 7 aprilie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.12/1959, ff. 147-165 and the annex to „Propuneri de reprofilare de cercetare științifică”, 10 noiembrie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.14/1959, f. 31.

⁹⁶ „Informare cu privire la unele probleme ale Editurii Academiei RPR”, 8 decembrie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.3/1958, ff. 208-210. This document contains an interesting recommendation

The immediate result of this change was an increase in the incentives (now both financial and prestige related) existent for historians to produce works according to the objectives set up by the party and to fulfill their research plans as decided upon at the level of the Academy's institutes. At the beginning of the 1960s, one would not find, as it was happening in 1954-55, complaints about the reluctance of the members of the profession to finalize their work. On the contrary, criteria of research and publication became dominant on the historical front to the extent that they even had an impact even at the level of the universities. The teaching cadres of the history department increasingly perceived themselves, in an environment of peer pressure where work at the treatise was the new standard of excellence, as *researchers* rather than *pedagogues*. Both Daicoviciu and Oțetea remarked, in different occasions, that “the faculty had finally regained its status of researchers in the field of science”.⁹⁷ A DPC document even warned that among the members of the historical front there was a widely spread erroneous belief that the only criterion for the evaluation of the faculty was their scientific activity at the expense of their pedagogical qualities. The trend was “for the teaching personnel to focus on writing as many articles and other scientific works of rather unequal value as possible instead of drafting the courses they teach to students, manifesting little interest in their pedagogical obligations.”⁹⁸

Indeed, by the beginning of the sixties, the possibility of recognition and reward on the historical front was the crucial factor for mobilization toward history-production. The cherry on the cake were the increasing number of training fellowship (*stagii de perfecționare*) and

from the point of view of mid-term developments in the historical front: the Academy's Publishing House, because of its expanding activities and increasing amount of research material received, would enlarge its headquarters by taking over two buildings previously belonging to the Institute for Romanian-Soviet Studies. (f. 211)

⁹⁷ See Daicoviciu's comments at the “Stenogramă seminar de la Școala Superioară de Științe Sociale „A.A. Jdanov” cu cadrele didactice din învățământul superior”, 11-12 aprilie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.20/1956, f. 26 and A Oțetea's intervention at „Sesiunea științifică a cadrelor didactice de la Facultatea de Istorie din București (3-5 iunie 1963)”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 4, an XVI, 1963, pp. 951-953.

⁹⁸ „Principalele concluzii și propuneri ale brigăzii CC al PMR...”, *Ibidem*, f. 50.

conference participations both in countries from the Soviet bloc and the West. Such perks were initially available only to academicians or high profile members of the collectives working at *Istoria României*. By the end of the fifties, a larger number of historians could benefit from them. The clarification of the interest groups within the historical front facilitated this development. The Academy established a steady system of international partnerships that replaced the limited exchanges that were in place since mid-fifties. The focus now was on a rigorous selection of young cadres who would be sent to specialization for longer periods of time in accordance to their respective fields of study. In 1961, 78 delegations traveled for specialization in socialist countries and 21 in ‘capitalist’ ones. The same year, for the first time, the Academy instituted the UNESCO fellowships, while, in the later years, it gradually took advantage of other international grants made available by further integration of Romanian scientific community on the world stage.⁹⁹

One last point needs to be made in order to have a more complete picture of the environment of planned science which came about after 1959. The significant changes experienced by the historical front took place under circumstances of an incipient push toward ‘Romanization’ in the scientific field. In 1958, the DPC warned that in some of the institute’s party organizations the national composition of their members did not reflect the correct national composition of the employees and researchers from the respective institutes. Therefore “30% of the members and party candidates were of other nationality than Romanian.”¹⁰⁰ The same year,

⁹⁹ „Informare privind unele aspecte din activitatea de relații culturale a M.I.C. în anul 1961”, 26 martie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.12/1962, ff. 1-6.

¹⁰⁰ „Informare cu privire la situația organizațiilor de partid din școli și institute de învățământ superior”, 21 martie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.4/1958, f. 25. The concern with the “correct social and national composition of cadres among intellectuals” is a theme that can be found in several DPC documents from 1955 to 1957. See for example “Referat privind activitatea Secției de Științe Istorice, Filozofice și Economico-Juridice”, 27 aprilie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, 64/1955, f. 15 or “Munca

despite the changes that were taking place at *Studii*, a party report indicated that great personalities such as A. D. Xenopol, N. Iorga, S. Pușcariu, or P. P. Negulescu were not valued to their proper scientific worth by the Academy's periodicals under the pretext that their "idealist, nationalist theories" would exert a negative influence over the scientific fields concerned with their work.¹⁰¹ Moreover, despite remarks concerning the danger of a recrudescence of Romanian great nation chauvinism, party documents more often than not preferred to focus on warnings about nationalism on the part of the Hungarian or German minorities.¹⁰² It was no coincidence that in 1959, at the same time with the creation of the "Babes-Bolyai" University in Cluj, the Academy's section of history in Targu-Mures was disbanded (it was re-opened in 1964).

In February 1960, the DPC announced victoriously that the proportion of Romanians among the teaching staff in the field of social sciences increased to 77%.¹⁰³ In 1963, the Central Committee delegations that were sent to evaluate the party work with intellectuals in Banat and Cluj regions advised that "greater attention should be given within party organizations to a better

Comitetelor regionale de partid cu intelectualii", 6 aprilie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, 12/1957, f. 43.

¹⁰¹ „Referat privind unele aspecte ale muncii politice în rândul intelectualilor”, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.9/1958, f. 78. Another telling example for the tendency to go forward with the rehabilitation of 'elements from the past' despite their disruptive potential is the reintegration of C. C. Giurescu at the Academy's History Institute in Bucharest. This decision was taken during a meeting between the leadership of the Section for Science and Culture and members of the Academy's Presidium. V. Malinschi, secretary of the Academy, communicated to the Section that Giurescu was about to be re-hired full time. The deputy chief of the Section declared that the historian was worthy of reinstatement, brushing aside one of his colleague's observation that this personnel addition would only make matters worse at the Institute in relation to the cadres' social and political composition. Increased prestige and proficiency of history-production was by them among the Section's primary priorities. See „Minuta ședinței din 27 februarie 1959 de la conducerea Secției Știință și Cultură”, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no. 12/1959, f. 76.

¹⁰² For example see „Informației cu privire la unele probleme ale muncii în domeniul propagandei și culturii”, aprilie 9, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.37/1958, ff. 22-29.

¹⁰³ „Informație cu privire la compoziția social-politică a cadrelor didactice...”, *Ibidem* and „Acțiuni întreprinse de direcție, secție și sector în anul 1959”, *Ibidem*.

knowledge of Romanian language by *all* working people in our motherland – a crucial element in our work of patriotic education.”¹⁰⁴

The most representative example of these tendencies is, of course, the unification of the Romanian university in Cluj with the Hungarian one. As most of the transformations analyzed in this chapter, the process was two-fold: first, it was a measure meant to increase control and centralization over the administration of higher-education in the second largest city in Romania¹⁰⁵; second, with the nomination of a rector that had a long history of nationalist tendencies, namely C. Daicoviciu, and in the context of a Romanization of the university's leadership, the unification amounted to strengthening of the dominant national element.¹⁰⁶ For example, at the Department of History and Philosophy, of its seven sections only two still had 10% of their courses taught in Hungarian.¹⁰⁷ The communist regime's gradual turn toward “domesticization”¹⁰⁸ functioned, to a certain extent, as an additional safety mechanism for *Romanian* historians. An extensive purge of the profession was unlikely considering that these specialists both belonged to the national core and wrote its history.

¹⁰⁴ „Concluziile brigăzilor CC al PMR care au controlat în regiunile Cluj și Banat, munca în rândul intelectualilor (aprilie-noiembrie 1963)”, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.19/1963, f. 29.

¹⁰⁵ Almira Țetea, „Aspecte ale mersului Universității din Cluj la sfârșitul anilor ‘50”, in *Analele Sighet* 8, pp. 779-789.

¹⁰⁶ S. Botoni shows that at the beginning of the unification of the two universities there were two Hungarian pro-rectors. By 1967, the number of pro-rectors was increased to five of which three were Romanian. Seven of eight deans were Romanian; the same with 67% of the faculty. S. Botoni, *Transilvania rosie*, p. 20. For the events that led to the unification also see I. Boca, 1956. *Un an de ruptură*.

¹⁰⁷ One of the most important party members of Hungarian origin, Janos Fazekas, in his *samokritika* argued that one of the explanations for the 1956 outburst of Hungarian nationalism in Cluj was that decision-makers within the regional party committee “did not create the conditions for them [Hungarians] to learn Romanian, thus preparing the ground for nationalist elements”. *Apud* Rafael-Dorian Chelaru, “Crearea Universității Babeș-Bolyai și reforma învățământului în limba minorităților. Cazul Janos Fazekas” in *Analele Sighet* 8, pp. 821-835.

¹⁰⁸ Zbigniew Brzezinski defined the concept as the “preoccupation with local, domestic communist objectives, at the expense of broader, international Soviet goals.” Zbigniew K. Brzezinski, *The Soviet Bloc: Unity and Conflict*, rev. ed. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1967), p. 52

Nevertheless, what the present chapter clearly showed is that the RWP did undergo, from 1958 until 1960, a fine tuning of sorts at the level of the personnel, institutionally, and thematically. Leonte Răutu, the DPC head, summarized the intricacies of this process:

the superiority of a socialist system lies in the fact that it can adjust incurring disproportions without turbulences. It can correct itself where errors appear, but this can be done only if a party and state leadership guided by scientific policies, careful with the phenomena of life, exists and if it intervenes in timely fashion. This is what we have done: when it was necessary, in 1953, and in 1956, some situations and proportions were corrected. It also happened that sometimes peripheral, antiparty elements, seeking unhealthy sensationalism started whispering behind our back says: ‘did you hear. The line has changed’. But reality was different, the numbers and results clearly show this. And in those instances the party delivered a merciless blow. And it will strike these antiparty elements equally ruthlessly in the future too.¹⁰⁹

Indeed, the RWP re-asserted its role as the sole umpire and organizer of knowledge. The policies adopted in the period analyzed in the present chapter were fundamentally ambivalent: its ideological and organization authority was further entrenched on the scientific field; at the same time, the accelerated shift toward regime individuality and autochthonousness could not be sustained without relying on science, i.e., history.

It can be argued that at the end of the fifties and during early sixties, the RWP basically re-affirmed that “Science could not be separated from politics and ideology—in other words, that Knowledge could not be independent of Power.”¹¹⁰ On the historical front, the disciplinary and coercive measures were rather short-lived for the epistemic community was already engaged in master-projects crucial for the process of identity building of Romanian communism. When they were applied, their impact was considerably alleviated by an enlargement of co-option mechanism (reward, recognition, ‘Romanization’). Despite continuous commitment to the construction of a red elite, to ‘democratization’ of higher education, the RWP observed carefully Lenin’s principle of cultural revolution of “successful blending of the victorious proletarian

¹⁰⁹ “Expunere făcută de tovarășul Leonte Răutu despre sarcinile muncii de propagandă și agitație”, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no. 10/1960, ff. 32.

¹¹⁰ Alexei B. Kojevnikov, *Stalin’s Great Science*, p. 281.

revolution and bourgeois culture.”¹¹¹ The goal of writing a new, socialist national history ultimately gain the upper hand over what Bogdanov once called the necessity to create a ‘proletarian science’. Historians now became “an army engaged in a great struggle of organizing our people’s effort, taking it into the direction indicated by the party.”¹¹² With its dominance now safely consolidated, the Romanian communist regime had no problem in designating history as a *chosen* science, one entrusted with encoding its authenticity and world-view into the national past.

The historical front had reached a pact with the communist power: the ultimate validation of its production and the recognition of its actors was the absolute prerogative of the party. Kojevnikov excellently characterized the status quo during the stage of communist consolidation of a scientific field: “far from being either romantic love or forcible submission, the partnership—to carry the gender metaphor further—more closely resembled a traditional marriage of convenience. Based on some shared values and interests and a process of give-and-take, it was not free of occasional domestic violence.”¹¹³ Or, to paraphrase the chief of the Central Committee’s Section for Culture and Science, P. Țugui, among historians “he who writes closest to the party spirit, will win. We will not get involved, but they must be determined to work well.”¹¹⁴ And they did. In 1960 the first volume of the communist treatise of national history was released to the market. Other three will follow until 1964.

¹¹¹ A. Vucinich, *Empire of Knowledge*, p. 120.

¹¹² “Stenograma expunerii lui P. Niculescu-Mizil privind probleme ale muncii politico-educative a partidului”, 17 decembrie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.44/1963, ff. 15.

¹¹³ Alexei B. Kojevnikov, *Stalin’s Great Science*, p. 290-291.

¹¹⁴ „Stenograma discuțiilor în ședința de analiză muncii sectoarelor Artă, Științele Naturii și Științele Sociale, care a avut loc în zilele de 15 și 18 noiembrie 1957”, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.31/1957, f. 15.

Part Two: The Party and National History

IV

The Romanian Workers' Party and Regime Individuality

A. Changing Times, Persistent Stalinism

The task of writing the treatise of national history, assigned to the historical front by the IInd RWP Congress in 1955, was perceived by both party and historians as an emancipatory project. According to one DPC document from 1960, Gheorghiu-Dej considered that the treatise was supposed “to provide devastating refutations to the erroneous, antiscientific theses of bourgeois historians about our country’s past, to the inimical positions held by historians and journalists from abroad.”¹ The overall effort of creating fundamental monographs about the Nation was a liberating endeavor. Traiana Săvulescu, the President of the RPR Academy, structured his 1955 address “Science Working for the People and Toward the Building of Socialism” upon a quote from Timotei Cipariu, a Transylvanian national intellectual, founding member of the Romanian Academy (1866) and prominent figure of the 1848 revolutionary movement. Using his predecessor’s words, he stated that “we have begun to free our country, to liberate our language. But honorable audience, we have only begun, we are far from being done. It is our duty to continue and complete this process.”² At a time when the RWP’s doctrine and

¹ “Observații la proiectul de Istoria României”, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no. 34/1960, f.3. The document is signed by Miron Constantinescu in the name of the collective that drafted the text and it is address directly to Gheorghiu-Dej.

² Săvulescu, “Știința...”, *Ibidem*, f. 23.

practices were gradually shifting toward regime individuality and systemic self-centeredness, science and history in particular, substantiated this change. In other words, to paraphrase Anna Pankratova's declaration at a *Voprosy istorii* readers' conference in 1956, the problems of Romanian historiography were the problems of Romanian communism's ideology.³ The process of re-professionalization and of institutional reform of the discipline was closely supplemented by the reformulation of its founding identitarian narratives. By 1964, a new balance was found between science and ideology, for, as Iorgu Iordan (then vice-President of the Academy) argued, "if the two notions are interpreted correctly, they are not mutually exclusive."⁴ Those historians who survived or were rehabilitated after successive waves of purges (1948, 1950-1952, 1958) were provided with novel grounds for stability "on the basis of the imperative of increasing production." They were gained over by the regime and this budding trust based relationship was founded on "a greatly needed new spirit of cultural creation."⁵

From 1957 to 1963, the polycentric historical front was developing under circumstances of consolidation of party control over planned science. This generated a new dynamic in the relationship between the historians' epistemic community and the practices of self-definition employed by the RWP domestically and within the Soviet Bloc. By no means synchronic, the trajectory of the former increasingly intersected with the agenda of the latter. To put it differently, the debates and struggle over interpretation in relation to specific topics, themes, personalities, or events on the historical front amounted to a pool of potentially legitimating topoi for the RWP in its endeavor to carve an identity in the post-Stalin era. After 1956, the

³ Markwick, *Ibidem*, p. 4.

⁴ Iordan, *Ibidem*, p. 112.

⁵ Academician Mihai Ralea, "Raport asupra atitudinii intelectualilor față de regim și a calității producției intelectuale", ANIC, Fond Prpagandă și Agitație, 141/1955, f. 1-63 in Dan Cătănuș (ed.), *Intelectuali români...*, p. 148 and p. 159.

Romanian communist elite grouped around Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej could no longer rely on merely emulating the Soviet Union in order to preserve its grip over power. The re-assertion of its right to rule during de-Stalinization required proofs and manifestations of authenticity, nationally and internationally. The challenge faced by the communist regime was two-fold: how to preserve its own version of Marxist-Leninism at a time when the world-communist movement was shaken by the Sino-Soviet conflict? And, how to consolidate and deepen its domesticization that allowed it to implement its transformist program of building socialism?

By early 1960s, the RWP leadership had found the answer to this existential dilemma: reverting to the cardinal principle of Stalinism – building socialism in one country. It allowed for the regime to by-pass systemic reform, and implicitly leadership change (i.e., de-Stalinization). It also permitted its entrenchment by means of claiming the rebirth and progress of the *Romanian* people. In the process of the fulfillment of socialist construction, “the political, moral, and ideological unity of the entire people around the party developed and deepened.” The Party thus became the people’s “beating heart, its conscience, [the embodiment of] its collective wisdom and will.”⁶ In such manner, the self-reliant Romanian communist state realized the unique potential of the people. A party that had suffered from “a chronic deficit of legitimacy” (Tismaneanu), could finally claim loyalty based on national pride and dignity. The path the RWP had taken, however, emulated late Stalinism rather than Khrushchevism (or other forms of “reform Marxism[-Leninism]”). According to Erik van Ree, the former was “an ideology that bluntly put *two* points of departure: nation and class, and *two* main goals: national development

⁶ „40 de ani de luptă sub steagul atotbiruitor al marxism-leninismului” (aniversarea a 40 de ani de la crearea Partidului Comunist din România) pp. 425-464 in Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, *Articole și cuvântări. August 1959 – mai 1961* (București: Editura Politică, 1961), p. 452 and 442.

and world communism, next to each other”.⁷ It was “national in form, etatist in content”⁸ and it relied on a diffuse concept of the ‘people’, which was “a popular community ... organized into a state, to which all individuals, all art and all science should dedicate themselves. It was this community that was expected to operate as a self-reliant, more or less closed unit in the world at large.”⁹ Dedication to the common good meant that “citizens unite[d] with their fellows in all respects – in deed, in word and even in thought. In this state, community of purpose and community of action are among the most respected values.”¹⁰ Or, to quote Gheroghiu-Dej, “the moral-political unity of the people [...] became the unshakable foundation of our popular-democratic regime.”¹¹

The Romanian communist elite claimed legitimacy on the basis of its accomplishment of radical change materialized in grandiose transformist projects (particularly industrialization and collectivization)¹², and couched in narratives expressing its increased adaptability to tradition, communal heritage, and ethno-cultural primordialism.¹³ To paraphrase Lucian Boia, the imperative of progress and the Nation imposed a principle of order that provided for regime sustainability and reproduction. But, it also represented both a communicative basis and a regulatory mechanism within a historical front very much haunted by its own specters of

⁷ Erik van Ree, “Stalin as Marxist: the Western roots of Stalin’s Russification of Marxism,” pp. 159-180 in Sarah Davies and James Harris eds., *Stalin: A New History* (Cambridge, UK : Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 178.

⁸ D. Brandenberger and A.M. Dubrovsky, “The people need a tsar: the emergence of National Bolshevism as Stalinist ideology, 1931-1941”, *Europe-Asia Studies* 5 (1998), 873-92.

⁹ Erik van Ree, *The Political Thought*, p. 189.

¹⁰ *Ibidem.*, p. 19.

¹¹ „Pentru victoria deplină a socialismului în patria noastră, pentru pace și bunăstarea poporului!” (3 martie 1961), pp. 368-393, in Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, *Articole și cuvântări*, p. 381.

¹² Andrei Cioroianu, *Pe umerii lui Marx – o introducere în istoria comunismului românesc* (București : Curtea Veche, 2005), p. 368.

¹³ Kenneth Jowitt pointed out that, after the Second Party Congress, “there was something of a consensus within the Party’s elite on the need for a greater adaptive capacity by the Party and regime in order to take advantage of what it had already achieved and to increase its capacity to act effectively on its goals. [...] an increased emphasis at the 1955 Congress on interpreting the theory of Marx-Engels-Lenin-Stalin in terms of Romanian condition.” See Kenneth Jowitt, *Revolutionary Breakthroughs*, p. 152.

solidarity, timelessness, and authenticity incumbent in pre-communist legacies.¹⁴ In conclusion, the national emancipation of history-production fit nicely into the picture of a party searching and finding its own way to construct socialism. Themes, practices, and opportunities would benefit both sides, generating a new ground for the interpenetration of the political and the historiographical.

B. Models of Emancipation

In April 1956, during a meeting of the Political Bureau that analyzed the impact and the meaning of the CPSU's XXth Congress, Dej remarked the attitude of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) that "seemingly ... discussed this problem most thoroughly and at a high level. [...] The Central Committee of the CCP debated the issue in close connection with the historical development of the revolutionary proletarian movement in China and in reference to the CCP's experience."¹⁵ If one takes into account later developments, the RWP's mediating role in the Sino-Soviet conflict rooted in CCP's accusations of revisionism and departure from the true Marxist-Leninist spirit against Khrushchev (from 1958), one could interpret Dej's statement as one of the first signals that Romanian communist leaders began considering justificatory practices for deflecting de-Stalinization. Later events in the world-communist movement, such as the Moscow Declarations of 1957 and 1960, provided additional interpretational leverage for the RWP elite in its attempts to avoid a shake-up and to consolidate its domestic position. The first meeting (1957) did not bring any rebellious behavior from the Romanian delegation. But, those present (among them Nicolae Ceaușescu and Paul Niculescu-Mizil) could witness the Chinese

¹⁴ Lucian Boia, *History and Myth in Romanian Consciousness* (Budapest: CEU Press, 2001), p. 29.

¹⁵ Tudor and Cătănuș (eds.), *O destalinizare ratată*, p. 141.

critique of USSR's "great power chauvinism," one motif that, under various guises, would later dominate positions taken by RWP leaders.¹⁶

With the benefit of hindsight, one can notice in 1957 another interaction that can be considered relevant for the crystallization of the discourse of individuality of Romanian Communism. During the Moscow discussion, the delegation of the Polished United Workers' Party presented a paper that challenged the principle of a united world-communist movement with the CPSU at its center. Three points are important for our argument in this document: the idea of various paths under different circumstances to socialist development; the right of each party to formulate the dangers to its rule; and, mistakes in the construction of socialism in the Soviet Union have shaken the trust and friendship of the Polish people in the 'First Workers' State'. In this context, Gomulka added, his party's formal acceptance of the USSR's leading role would be mistakenly understood domestically as "bowing to the Soviet Union, an infringement of national sovereignty toward which our people is highly sensitive."¹⁷ Despite ultimately retreating from these positions, the Poles' reaction was the expression of their own difficulties to maintain a sustainable and legitimate regime in the aftermath of the 1956 October events that generated the national-communist change in leadership in this country.¹⁸

By late June 1960, the RWP would find themselves in the thick of the quarrel between the two most important communist parties – CPSU and PCC. The RWP's Third Party Congress was organized so that it would coincide with a preliminary meeting of communist parties across

¹⁶ Mihai Croitor, *România și conflictul sovieto-chinez (1956-1971)* (Cluj Napoca: Editura Mega, 2009), p. 158-159.

¹⁷ According to Paul Niculescu-Mizil, who provided this account based on notes made at the meeting by Ștefan Voicu, Gomulka and Ochab directly communicated their objections to the Romanian representatives, Nicolae Ceaușescu and Chivu Stoica. See Paul Niculescu-Mizil, *De la Comintern la comunism național. Despre Consfătuirea partidelor comuniste și muncitorești, Moscova, 1969* (Bucurști: Editura Evenimentului Zilei, 2001), pp. 58-59. The head of the Agitation and Propaganda Section also pointed to Palmiro Togliatti's emphasis, in 1957, on the importance of "a high degree of autonomy by each party" in the domestic decision-making process. (p. 80)

¹⁸ For details see Paczkowski, *The Spring Will Be Ours*.

the world as preparation for the ‘summit’ in Moscow, the same year. Such ‘coincidence’ would nevertheless strengthen Gheorghiu-Dej’s domestic and international prestige. However, Bucharest will be the stage for Khrushchev’s vicious attack against the Chinese ‘deviationist line’. The CCP’s response was in kind, among other things stressing the Soviets’ “patriarchic, arbitrary, and abusive” attitude that violated “the principle of discussions between brother parties”. To his dissatisfaction, Dej was forced to preside all sessions in which the Soviet leader lambasted the CCP. According to his own account: “Dej was the president of the Tribunal, while Khrushchev was the prosecutor. [...] We regret that all this happened at our Congress.” At the same time though, the RWP did fall in line completely with the CPSU.

The 1960 re-enactment in Moscow of the Sino-Soviet dispute placed into focus an additional topic: “the elimination of the regrettable consequences of the cult of personality.” The CCP rejected “the malicious negation of Stalin’s activity,” emphasized that the detrimental effects of the cult of personality affected *only some countries* [my emphasis], and asserted the necessity “for combining the general truth of Marxism with China’s concrete conditions” [the later being called in the Romanian documents, “the Sinification of Marxism” (*chinezirea marxismului*)].¹⁹ The split was irreversible. The two parties considered by the RWP equal in the communist movement were polarized on the matter of who represented ‘true’ Marxist-Leninism. But what the RWP took from this quarrel was the vocabulary for the definition of its own “political egoism” (Cioroianu): sovereignty, individual path to socialism, anti-hegemonism, limitedness of de-Stalinization, the interest of the people. According to Vladimir Tismaneanu, “the Romanian communist leadership proved to be extremely successful in constructing a platform for anti-de-Stalinization around the concepts of industrialization, autonomy,

¹⁹ Croitor, *Romania*, pp. 174-204.

sovereignty, and national pride.”²⁰ The Third Congress and the Central Committee Plenum (November 3 - December 5, 1961) allowed for a noticeable framing of the party line upon coordinates of *national interest*.

The credibility of RWP’s emancipation within the world-communist movement was strengthened internally by the beginning of the retreat of Soviet troops in 1958. Such a project had been discussed since 1955 and, in the aftermath of the RWP’s display of ideological conformism and commitment to the Soviet line during and after the Hungarian Revolution, endeared itself to the Soviet leadership despite initial reservations. As most scholars argue, the retreat of the Soviet troops was not a proof of autonomy by the Romanian communist regime, but rather an endorsement by Khrushchev of the RWP ruling elite. In other words, it was a validation of the results of the post-1956 power struggle in Romania. And, to quote the Soviet leader’s statement after one of the meetings between the two parties on the matter of the retreat: “We consider that our Romanian comrades are sincere in expressing their determination to build socialism.”²¹

C. A National Anniversary – The 1859 Centennial

The RWP, in the process of crystallizing a position and identity within the world communist movement, proceeded to reverse to the national past in search of foundational moments for the communist polity. At the end of the 1940s, there was a flurry of scholarship, lectures, party appropriations in reference to the Revolution of 1848 in the territories inhabited by Romanians. It was then the paradigmatic moment of the country’s history: a revolution with a social agenda, a democratic ethos, and all with an internationalist outlook. A decade later, the

²⁰ Vladimir Tismaneanu, *Stalinism for All Seasons*, p. 168.

²¹ Paul Niculescu-Mizil, *O istorie trită* (București: Editura Enciclopedică, 1997), p. 95.

RWP was celebrating a different type of event: *nation state building* – the unification of the two Romanian principalities of Moldova and Wallachia in 1859.

At the end of 1958, the RWP's Central Committee and the Council of Ministers decided that "January 24 1959 was an event of great historical significance in the life of our people, in the process of creating an independent Romanian state, and for Romania's social development." Consequently, the unification would be celebrated as "a major national festivity."²² The subsequent Anniversary Session of the Great National Assembly of the RPR in 1959 was opened by Chivu Stoica's speech. He was at the time President of the Council of Ministers, formally sharing power with Gheorghiu-Dej, but in reality he functioned merely as a front man, his official viewpoints reflecting completely those of the party leader. Stoica declared at the event that this Union set the foundation for the Romanian national unitary state. Moreover, he quoted 19th century Romanian politician and historian, Mihail Kogălniceanu, stating that "the unification was an emphatic act of the whole nation. [...] The unification was done by the nation."²³ The RWP officially inserted the Nation (non-normatively defined in Khrushchvite fashion as 'the large masses') into its historical understanding of the Romanian past. A quote from Marx did help the case, as the founding father interpreted, in 1860, Al Ioan Cuza's double election as the official seal on the Romanian nation's unification. This validation would soon become popular both in historiography and official discourse. The historical moment celebrated was situated in a developmental chain defined by "the people's struggle for the fulfillment of its ideals of national

²² "Hotărâre a Comitetului Central al Partidului Muncitoresc Român și a Consiliului de Miniștri al Republicii Populare Române privind sărbătorirea Centenarului Unirii Țărilor Române", 20 decembrie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.33/1958, ff. 1-3. In typical fashion, the decision consists in listing 11 points detailing the type of activities that were to be undergone by the party, local bodies, cultural and academic institutions etc, including changing the name of streets and square, memorial ceremonies for historical personalities involved in the event. Last but not least, the document indicates that "In Bucharest in the Republic Square, in Iasi at the Uniri Square, and in other cities, popular manifestations will be organized ('the unification dance')." (f. 2)

²³ Chivu Stoica, "100 de ani de la Unirea Țărilor Române", *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 1, an XII, 1959, p. 13.

independence, removal of exploitation, and of building a luminous life for all those who work.”²⁴

In this context, the anniversary of the Romanian state was the perfect opportunity for the communist leader to formulate the RWP’s international position at the international level:

our country supports the removal of all limitations or discriminations in economic international relations. It reaffirms its decision to continue its efforts toward widening its economic and cultural exchanges with all countries on the basis of equality of rights and mutual benefit. The development of such relations at the international level can take place only based upon the common and total respect of independence and national sovereignty, on the noninterference in the domestic affairs of other peoples.²⁵

Chivu Stoica’s stand will soon gain axiomatic qualities in the self-representation of Romanian communism. It was the result of the lessons learnt by the RWP leaders from the tribulations of the world-communist movement: the challenges of de-Stalinization, Khrushchev’s re-tooling of the Soviet bloc²⁶, and the increasingly sharper attack of the CCP against the CPSU.

The last element of this encoding of emancipation was the emphasis placed on *national consciousness* rooted in the cultural nourishment of the people. Appealing again to Kogălniceanu, Stoica welded social progress with cultural enlightenment. The unification set the ground for reforms that allowed for “civilizing society and strengthening the nation” (Chivu Stoica). Such position officialized a new meaning to post-1955 discussions over the manner in which tradition could be critically reconsidered. The element of class and economic determinism had weighted heavily on the possibilities of asserting cultural continuities, of expanding the scope of the usable past. The two will still function as sorting devices in the process of historiographical recuperation. But the placement of national consciences as stepping stone on the road to socialist consciousness opened significantly wider venues for making sense of

²⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 12.

²⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 18.

²⁶ According to Kenneth Jowitt, “regime individuality reefer to an organization of Leninist regimes that imperatively asserts the substantive – not simply procedural – unity of a group *and* recognizes the existence of distinct and potentially conflicting interests within it.” See Kenneth Jowitt, *New World Disorder*, p. 183.

history. Earlier, in 1957, an editorial in *Studii* dealing with the problem of patriotic education, had used another quote from Kogălniceanu: “this [national] history shows to us who we were, what have we become, and like the rule of three sum, it reveals to us the unknown variable: what we are to become.”²⁷

In the context of the re-insertion of culture as a determining factor in the historical progress of the people, the RWP leadership encoded the valorification of continuities. Mihail Kogălniceanu’s ubiquitous presence in the party argumentation was no coincidence either. One of the most important representatives of the school of romantic historiography in Romania and in Eastern Europe and one of the few personalities that figured continuously in the communist period regardless of its period of development, Kogălniceanu’s work on the realm of history could indeed be called upon to sustain the RWP’s take on usable past. According to Monika Barr, his approach, like many of his generation, focused on reconstituting continuities, on crafting “a suitable history which links present to past... The quest for historic continuities is to be located especially in those places and at those times in which a national identity emerges and crystallizes.” It allowed for the decoupling of state from the national community, because in Kogălniceanu’s reading of the past “however discontinuous the history of the state might have been, ‘underneath’, the people had always possessed a continuous history.”²⁸ Communist historiography and the party line owned its own historical continuity based on dialectical materialism: the development of productive forces and, implicitly, the succession of modes of production. The fundamental consequence of the overlap or synchronicity between communal

²⁷ „Educația patriotică și sarcinile științei istoriei,” *Ibidem*, p. 9.

²⁸ Monika Barr, *Historians and Nationalism. East-Central Europe in the Nineteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), p. 66.

and materialistic continuities was the legitimization of appropriating historical necessity for national historical development.

In 1956, one historian, in an article about the creation of the Academic Society (1866-67), argued that “culture was [at the time] meant, on the one hand, to raise the people themselves, to make it capable of constituting itself into a nation and into an independent state, a national state. On the other, culture also had to aid the unification of the nation’s limbs scattered by the whirlwinds of the times.”²⁹ By 1959, such reading of the role of culture in history had found a *modus vivendi* with the axiom of materialism that lay at the foundation of the regime. As we shall see in this chapter, the officialization of this equilibrium will revitalize and deepen the meaning of one of the resolutions of the Second RWP Congress, namely, that “historical science is an integrative part of the ideological front of the party”.³⁰ Under the circumstances, the task set for history-production, in 1955, to “reveal the historical roots of the birth of the regime of popular democracy”³¹ would generate what some scholars called “a regression into the ‘bottomless well’ of the past.”³² Following this argument, by the end of the fifties, the RWP was already asserting its own political modernity where the repetition of founding acts periodically confirmed the continuity of the Nation.

To return to the celebration of 1959, the leader of the party, Ghoerghiu-Dej, was also present during the Anniversary Session of the Great National Assembly of the RPR on January 24th. He was accompanied by the members of the Political Bureau and other high profile

²⁹ Dan Berindei, „Înființarea Societății Literare..”, *Ibidem*, p. 21.

³⁰ “Sarcinile de mare răspundere puse de Congresul al II-lea al PMR în fața istoricilor”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 1, an 9, p.7.

³¹ *Ibidem*, p. 8.

³² Constantin Iordachi and Balázs Trencsényi, “In Search of a Usable Past: The Question of National Identity in Romanian Studies, 1990-2000,” *East European Politics and Societies* (2003) 17, pp. 426-427.

members of the party apparatus and of the government.³³ The event was preceded by the opening of the Museum of Unification (*Muzeul Unirii*) in Iași and by a scientific session at the Romanian Academy. Some of the interventions were either published or discussed in *Studii*.³⁴ I will return to their content in the next section, because for the moment I am only trying to map out the RWP's gradual configuration of regime individuality. On January 23rd, Bucharest Museum of History was also opened, marking the 500th anniversary of the city. Public events were spiced with folkloric manifestations, while the Romanian capital's "March 28th" Square was renamed "Unirii". One historian who experienced the 1859 Centennial offered in his memoirs an interesting analysis: "without over hyping the manifestations organized during the 100th Anniversary of the Principalities' Unification, one could argue that they reflected and anticipated at a smaller scale what will happened both at a political and historiographical level in the following years."³⁵ One DPC document demonstrated the self-interested perception of the celebrations on the side of the RWP. It also revealed the vocabulary of solidarity, unity and identification that the cadres used for interpreting the events: "it [the Centennial] showed the care which our party displays for the preservation and nourishment of the most advanced national traditions of our people. The celebrations ... underscored the significance of the Unification of the Romanian Countries [*Țările Române*] in the people's existence. They were a strong manifestation of attachment and love of the working people across the country for the party, the

³³ For a complete list of the participants see Müller, *Politică și istoriografie*, p. 251. Also see *Scînteia* issues from January 24th and 23rd.

³⁴ A collection of documents was also published, followed a year later by a thematic volume. See *Documente privind Unirea Principatelor* (București: Editura Academiei RPR, 1959) and Andrei Oțetea, Nichita Adăniloie, Dan Berindei, Cornelia Bodea *et al.*, *Studii privind Unirea Principatelor* (București: Editura Academiei RPR, 1960).

³⁵ Constantiniu, *De la Răutu la Roller...*, p. 226.

government, for our motherland.” The document mentioned that over 2.8 million people participated at the public manifestations.³⁶

One needs to add that the communist regime did have at least two dress rehearsals for the Centennial: the anniversary of 500 years since Stephen the Great’s accession to Moldova’s throne (1957)³⁷ and exhibition of the part of the Romanian thesaurus returned by the Soviet Union in 1956 (the thesaurus had been sent to Tsarist Russian in 1917 during the First World War). I am signaling these two celebrations for several reasons. The first one did not turn into an occasion of asserting state individuality or any form of systemic exceptionalism. On the contrary, it did not benefit from a consistent endorsement by the RWP leadership. The second is relevant on two grounds: on the one hand, after the exhibition, the thesaurus will gradually be inventoried offering grounds in mid 1960s for further leverage on the side Romanian side in the negotiations, discussions, or debates with the Soviets. On the other hand, this event was christened by the RWP leadership, among the visitors being Gheorghiu-Dej and Petru Groza. The massive public attendance for an exhibition that lasted up to eight months, according to one of its organizers, brought to the fore the symbolic relevance of national patrimony. The same author even infers that the 1957 anniversary was a by-product of the impact of the 1956 event.³⁸ What is certain is that the thesaurus would become one of the leitmotifs of Romanian-Soviet quarrels. The RWP went as far as identifying a passage from Lenin writings that was promptly included in the 1960

³⁶ „Informare cu privire la sărbătorirea Centenarului Unirii Țărilor Române”, 9 februarie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.12/1958, f. 43.

³⁷ For details see „Informare cu privire la manifestările ce au avut loc cu ocazia aniversării a 500 de ani de la urcarea pe tron a lui Ștefan cel Mare”, 8 mai, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no. 18/1957, ff. 69-60.

³⁸ Giurescu, *De la Sovromconstrucții...*, pp. 220-224.

volume *Lenin despre România*.³⁹ Last but not least, the Centennial was followed at the Academy, in September, by an international conference of Romance languages that opened with a keynote presented by Alphonse Dupront.⁴⁰

D. From the Internal Factor to the National Forces of Insurrection

The year 1959 was not only a year of regression into national history for purposes of regime legitimization. It also brought the 15th Anniversary of Romania's "liberation from the fascist yoke". In other words, it was an occasion that allowed for a limited reinterpretation of the nature of August 23, 1944 – the date when Romania switched to the Allied camp in the Second World War and Ion Antonescu, the pro-Nazi military dictator, was arrested. This event that would gradually turn into the founding moment of the communist regime in Romania became in 1959 a symbol of the successful struggle against fascism of the internal forces led by the party. An article published in *Lupta de Clasă* under the pen name Nicolae Crețu (Roller used to use it, but now, after his death, it became generic for the party line) advanced the thesis of an military insurrection coordinated by the Communist Party of Romania (PCdR) and prepared as early as 1943.⁴¹ Moreover, these actions were the result of a thorough and deep understanding of class contradictions in the landowner-bourgeois regime of the country. As another author, Radu Florian, mentioned in his piece in *Analele Institutului de istorie a partidului*, "the revolution in our country was ignited because of the maximum accentuation of the antagonist contradictions that riddled capitalist Romania." Moreover, the same article contended that the revolutionary

³⁹ The passage went as follows: "the great treasures belonging to the Romanian government must be preserved with greatest care in order to be returned in pristine condition after the overthrow of Romanian counterrevolution." See Niculescu-Mizil, *O istorie trăită*, p. 66.

⁴⁰ Berindei, *Istoria Academiei...*, p. 350-351.

⁴¹ Nicolae Crețu, „Partidul Comunist Român – organizatorul și conducătorul insurecției armate din august 1944”, *Lupta de clasă*, nr. 8, 1959.

situation had two facets: a social one, based on exploitation and economic crisis, and a national one, as the country had lost its independence because of Nazi occupation.⁴²

The alterations in the party line on the topic of August 23, 1944 were made public to wider audiences during a common, mammoth scientific session of the “Ștefan Gheorghiu” Higher Party School, the Institute of Party History of the RWP’s Central Committee, the Academy’s institutes of social sciences and of the Military Academy (August 14-18). During the proceedings, the “military insurrection” would also be described as “the beginning of a revolution that changed in our country a social system based on exploitation.”⁴³ This position only echoed the party line formulated by Gheorghiu-Dej. According to the RWP leader,

the victorious armed insurrection created a massive momentum for the struggle of the masses, it represented the beginning of a popular revolution which main goal was the elimination of the remnants of feudalism and the completion of the bourgeois-democratic revolution along with the implementation of a series of democratic reforms that could pave a wide path to economic and social progress.⁴⁴

As one author remarked, from 1959 to 1964, August 23rd would gradually turn into a “substitute for proletarian revolution.”⁴⁵ In the absence of a revolutionary program, the historiography would now focus on describing the circumstances of the events thus creating an ever expanding historical space for the communist role. This new historiographical encoding was

⁴² Radu Florian, “Insurecția armată de la 23 August 1944 – începutul revoluției populare din țara noastră”, *Analele Institutului de istorie a partidului de pe lângă CC al PMR*, an V, nr. 4, iulie-august 1959.

⁴³ B. Bălțeanu și Gh. Matei, „Insurecția armată de la 23 august, început al revoluției populare în România”, Sesiunea științifică consacrată celei de- XV-a aniversări a eliberării României de sub jugul fascist, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 4, an XII, 1959, p. 362. Matei was the deputy director of the Institute for Party History, while Bălțeanu was deputy editor of *Studii*, prominent figure of the section of contemporary history at the Academy’s Institute of History in Bucharest, one of the individuals brought in 1958 to safeguard the party line at the most important scholarly journal of history of the Academy. Bălțeanu would have an interesting career in the following years. His ascent was meteoric, he would basically be promoted almost out of nowhere, rise very fast, but then disappear in a few years. He was expelled from Romania back to the Soviet Union (he was born in Bassarabia). It seems that his party line might have been closer to the CPSU than to that of the RWP. See Constantiniu, *De la Răutu la Roller*, pp. 193-195 and 220-221. I would also like to thank professor Vladimir Tismaneanu for pointing out to me this interesting case.

⁴⁴ Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, “A XV-a aniversare a eliberării României de sub jugul fascist”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 4, an XII, 1959, p. 9.

⁴⁵ Mihalache, *Istorie și practici*, p. 228.

employed also as a proof of the PCdR's "fervent patriotism," for the communists had been "the most decisive fighters against fascism and the continuators of our people's greatest traditions of struggle."⁴⁶ In fact, this retooling of the party's position from 1943-1944 allowed for, in the following years, the inauguration of a continuum of antifascist resistance that encompassed *both* the mythologies of illegality (with the 1933 Grivita strikes at the core) and a growing encomiastic literature on the 'heroic' contribution of PCdR members during the Spanish Civil War and French *maquis*. For example, at the November 30 – December 5, 1961 plenum of the Central Committee, Valter Roman, the director of the Political Publishing House, former member of the International Brigades and head of the Romanian section of the Comintern controlled "Free Romania"⁴⁷, would declare that

We said that we were fighting for Spain's freedom, we were fighting so that Spain could be socialist but, at the same time, we were fighting for the liberation of Romania, so that in Romania would be socialism. We proclaimed that we defend at the gates of Madrid the territorial integrity of our country, which was endangered by Hitlerite and Horthyst fascism. It was no surprise then that Titulescu congratulated us for the telegram we sent in this sense in 1937.⁴⁸

One should not be taken aback by the reference to Titulescu, the latter begin used as additional validation for the correct national position of the party. The same year, another former

⁴⁶ M. Fătu, D. Dragnea și C. Prigoreanu, „Conținutul patriotic al luptei forțelor democratice conduse de P.C.R. împotriva criminalului război antisovietic”, Sesiunea științifică consacrată celei de- XV-a aniversări..., *Ibidem*, p. 364. Of the three authors, M Fătu will make a prominent career, being co-author (with Ion Spălățelu) to the book that formulated the RCP's position on the Iron Guard: *Garda de Fier, organizație teroristă de tip fascist* (București: Editura Politică 1971).

⁴⁷ For a detailed account of Roman's career see V. Tismaneanu, "Valter Roman sau gustul amar al conformismului", in *Arheologia Terorii...*

⁴⁸ "Stenograma plenarei CC al PMR, intervenția lui Valter Roman", in Dan Cătănuș, *A doua destalinizare. Gh. Gheorghiu-Dej la apogeul puterii* (București: Vremea, 2005), p. 241. This standpoint did not go unchallenged though. At the second international conference of the historians working on the resistance against 'Hitlerism' (April 1962), a French historian rejected the pervading thesis among party historians in Eastern Europe that the participation of patriots of nationalities or citizenships different from the country of which resistance movement they were involved in was founded on their patriotism or internationalism. The French historian argued that they exclusively fought because of their anti-Hitlerist convictions. The account of this conference includes a prompt clarification of the issue: "these statements were dismissed by way of argument by the Soviet, Romanian, and Bulgarian delegations." (f. 2) See "Informație cu privire la cea de-a II-a Conferință Internațională a Istoricilor", 6 iunie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.18/1962, ff. 1-3.

‘illegalist’, P. Constantinescu-Iași, published a celebratory article about the former interwar Romanian Foreign Minister. With the occasion of the 80 year-anniversary since Titulescu’s birth, Constantinescu-Iași wrote the following: “a man of vast culture endowed with exceptional oratorical talent and with a keen analytical sense, N Titulescu was, in the period between the two world wars, a remarkable figure of the country’s public life, a top eschalon personality of European politics.”⁴⁹

Titulescu would be the first in the line of personalities of the first half of the 20th century that would be gradually rehabilitated by the RWP/RCP. He was employed as a legitimating factor for several of the party’s domestic and international objectives: first, as already mentioned, his appreciation for the communists’ position in the second half of the 1930s helped frame party history into a national narrative; second, the RWP/RCP would identify their own foreign policy stand with Titulescu’s, the latter being perceived as a forefather of Romania’s post-1959 self-assertion within the Soviet bloc; and third, Titulescu’s support for the “Little Entente” strengthened the case for the RWP/RCP emphasis on South-Eastern European cooperation and diplomacy, particularly Romania’s role as political and cultural regional leader.⁵⁰

Another historiographical theme developed during the 15th anniversary of August 23rd was that the strategy employed by the communists in their takeover of state power had been focused upon avoiding civil war at the end of the Second World War in Romania.⁵¹ Moreover, the insurrection and the PCdR actions in the interest of the Romanian people that followed in the

⁴⁹ P. Constantinescu-Iași și I. M. Oprea, “O importantă figură a diplomației europene – Nicolae Titulescu (cu prilejul împlinirii a 80 de ani de la nașterea sa)”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 6, an XIV, 1961, pp. 1411.

⁵⁰ D. Giurescu shows in his memoirs how by mid-1960s Titulescu became a topic of inter-institutional and personal competition on the historiographical front, specifically, between the Bureau of Analysis and Research of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Institute of Party History. See Giurescu, *De la Sovromonstructii...*, pp. 256-258.

⁵¹ For example D. Turcuș, „Lupta PCR pentru demascarea și alungarea elementelor fasciste din aparatul de stat în perioada 23 August 1944-6 Martie 1945”, *Sesiunea științifică...*, *Ibidem*, p. 364.

aftermath of August 23rd had been devised by the “prison nucleus”⁵² of the Party led by Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej. In 1959, the RWP leadership resultant out of the successive purges of 1944 (the elimination of Ștefan Foriș), 1948 (the arrest of L. Pătrășcanu, executed in 1954), 1952-1953 (the purge of A. Pauker, V Luca, and T. Georgescu), and of 1957-1958 (the removal of M. Constantinescu and I. Chișinevschi) was already establishing its national credentials. The exhibition at the Museum of Party History entitled “The Preparations for and the Accomplishment of the Armed Insurrection of August 1944” placed those who were at the time in prison (particularly in Târgu-Jiu but also in other places) at the center of the party struggle. The event even presented a plan in nine points devised by Dej for the organization and the unfolding of the ‘insurrection’. The party owed its correct line to the group led by the RWP leader, as one letter from those outside wrote to their jailed comrades: “in all we did we followed your advice. Especially the advice of F...(Fieraru, the underground nickname of Gh. Gheorghiu-Dej) was vital in devising the entire plan [for insurrection].”⁵³

It should be noted here that this exhibition represented the official re-entering of the Museum of Party History in the circuit of symbolic production. It had a new format: in 1958, the museum was moved into the location of the “Lenin-Stalin” Museum. The two institutions were merged both at the level of artifacts and administration.⁵⁴ This was one of the steps taken by the party leadership to control, subordinate, and dim Soviet cultural visibility in the public sphere.

⁵² Vladimir Tismaneanu identified three centers in the PCRdR during the Second World War: “the central committee, headed by Ștefan Foriș [...] Gheorghiu-Dej and the ‘Center of the Prisons’ [...] Ana Pauker and the Romanian émigré Bureau in Moscow.” By means of successive purges, Dej eliminated Foriș and Pauker along with those who supported them. Simultaneously, he successfully brought to his side prominent figures of the other two centers, such as Emil Bodnăraș and Gheorghe Stoica. This process of elimination *and* osmosis will reflect itself in the writing of party history. Tismaneanu, *Stalinism for All Season*, pp. 97-104.

⁵³ Expoziția „Pregătirea și înfăptuirea insurecției armate din august 1944”, *Studii Revistă de istorie*, 4, an XII, 1959, pp. 377-378.

⁵⁴ Ofelia Manole, „Informație cu privire la activitatea Institutului de Istorie a Partidului de pe lângă CC al PMR”, 23 mai, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.1/1958, ff. 268-272.

The classic case in this sense that of the Institute for Soviet and Romanian Studies (ISRS), which demise I will analyze later in parallel with the founding of the Institute for Southeastern European Studies. For the moment I will mention only the fact that, in 1956, the DPC proposed that the section of Soviet sciences of the ISRS would be included into an institute of scholarly information and documentation that would have a larger, international scope.⁵⁵ The consequence of this project was that in 1957, a section on universal history was added to the Academy's Institute of History in Bucharest. Within it there was a subfield of Russian-Romanian relations.

An additional problem that required clarification in Sovieto-Romanian exchanges related to August 23rd was that of who freed Bucharest. According to Niculescu-Mizil, then head of the DPC's propaganda section, three meetings helped settle this point of contention. The first was the meeting with Marshal I V Konev, who, during his visit in the country with the occasion of the August 23rd celebrations, wanted to offer as gift the flag of a military unit that allegedly liberated the capital. After the personal intervention of Gheroghiu-Dej, Konev gave up on this intention. The second was the fifth conference of institutes of Marxist-Leninism or of party history, when the Romanian side rejected the theme proposed by the Soviet representative, N I Shataghin, of discussing the danger of revisionism, opting to emphasize the Romanian contribution to the victory in the Second World War. And the third, the meetings in Moscow between the RWP's delegation and a Soviet delegation led by foreign minister Kosigin. The central topic of discussion was again the liberation of Bucharest. The issue was used, according to Mizil, as a pretext for the Romanian communist to re-assert their position on the central role of internal forces during the August 23rd 'military insurrection'. These three 'brotherly clashes' on historiography would have an immediate impact, for the Soviets accepted to correct the second

⁵⁵ „Referat cu privire la activitatea Institutului de Studii Romîno-Sovietic al Academiei RPR”, 23 aprilie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.17/1956, f. 56.

edition of textbook of *History of the CPSU* so that the their rendering of August 23rd would correspond to the Romanian official interpretation. The role of the Romanian people in these events and their contribution to the victory over Nazi Germany would then be properly (according to the RWP) assessed.⁵⁶

The historiographical flurry of 1959 on August 23rd along with the strong stand taken by the RWP in their quarrels with the Soviets over the historical interpretation of the events indicated that the ruling circle around Dej was expanding its legitimating mythology.⁵⁷ It did not suffice for the Romanian leader to be placed at the forefront of the 1933 Grivița strikes (matter already clarified with the purge of the Doncea group in 1958). Party history-production proceeded to constructing new symbolic scaffolding – that of his paramount figure in the victory over ‘fascism’ and in the national proletarian revolution. Vladimir Tismaneanu excellently characterizes this re-invention of the position and profile of the Romanian communist leader: “He was the ultimate survivor, the only Eastern European Cominform leader who outlived all the purges, upheavals, and changes, both under and after Stalin, without losing his seat or being excommunicated. [...] He stayed in power, ran his party, and even espoused a ‘national communism’ of sorts.”⁵⁸ The metamorphosis of Gheorghiu-Dej and of the RWP’s historical role will be expanded and accentuated increasingly at the expense of Soviet Union’s image as the ‘liberator’ of Romania. For the moment though, in 1959, historiography took on a rather dialectical approach on this topic: the emphasis on the internal factor would co-exist with a “routinized Sovietism” (Mihalache).

⁵⁶ Niculescu-Mizil, *O istorie trăită...*, pp. 155-163.

⁵⁷ For example, Emil Bodnăraș, a key player of the communist involvement into the August 23rd events would directly get involved into the organization of the exhibition “The preparations for and the accomplishment of the armed insurrection of August 1944”.

⁵⁸ Tismaneanu, *Stalinism for All Season*, p. 98.

The Moscow center did not, as Niculescu-Mizil recounts in his memoirs, simply fall in line with the RWP's position on the period 1943 to 1945. From 1959 until 1966, there were incessant discussions and conflicts on the general interpretation about the central role of the Romanian party versus the role of the Red Army in the events, about the role of other domestic personalities (e.g., King Michael), or on other various specific details in the evolution of the events. For example, in 1961, the director of the Institute of Party History, Ion Popescu-Puțuri⁵⁹, reported to the head of the DPC that, despite a final agreement with Soviet historians about necessary corrections related to Romania's role in *History of USSR's Great War for the Defense of the Motherland 1941-1945* (six volumes), the Romanian side noticed and discussed numerous errors in the text. Some of the issues presented by Popescu-Puțuri were: the absence of sections discussing the national antifascist resistance; the role of the PCdR in the organization and realization of the armed insurrection; the party line during the war; the erroneous description of the struggle of the masses led by the party from August 23, 1944 to March 6, 1945; and, as an overall diagnosis of the Soviet multi-volume project, the under appreciation of the internal factor and exaggerated emphasis on the external factor. The direct exchange with the head of the Soviet delegation, Prokofiev, is telling not only in reference to the stakes in play regarding history-production about August 23rd, but also with a view to the mechanisms of drafting party history. According to Puțuri, Prokofiev concluded their heated exchange as follows: "we are historians and we understand the interest of the party to leave some matters aside, for they are considered

⁵⁹ In 1961 he replaced at the head of the institute Gh Vasilichi. Puțuri will have a long reign surviving the succession in power. He became one of the main authors of Nicolae Ceaușescu's cult of personality. He was member of the Central Committee continuously from 1960 until 1989.

politically inappropriate. And this should be done, but it must be confirmed by higher party levels [on both sides].”⁶⁰

Indeed, the RWP’s emancipation could develop only at the expense of adding dints to the myth of the USSR as liberator of the country. And, Soviet historians’ methodological complaints would inevitably affect the budding heroicization of the Romanian communists, thus endangering its legitimacy: “Prokofiev asked: could the communist party really have enough influence over the army in order to be able to convince it to turn against Germany?”⁶¹ With such questions, the whole motif of military insurrection was blown to smithereens. It is no surprise that E. Bodnăraș was shocked to see that the interpretation in the *History of USSR’s Great War for the Defense of the Motherland 1941-1945* reminded of Molotov’s (a member of the anti-party group) formula “the warm wing of the Soviet Army, rather than [focusing] on the capacity of popular forces, under the leadership of the communist party and spearheaded by the working-class, to find [their own] solutions in Romania.”⁶² Just a year later, in 1962, another Soviet historian Usakov, produced further discomfort to the RWP. In his book about Nazi Germany’s foreign policy, he overlooked altogether August 23rd. A prompt rebuke will follow, as *Analele Institutului de istorie...* published a scathing review.⁶³

⁶⁰ Ion Popescu-Puțuri, “Notă legată de Istoria Marelui Război al uniunii Sovietice pentru Apărarea Patriei 1941-1945, în șase volume”, 3 mai, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.9/1961, f. 2.

⁶¹ *Ibidem*, f. 4. Another direction of disagreement is related to the RWP’s historians to admit the central role of King Michael. The Soviets insist on his correct position and leadership in the arrest of Marshal Antonescu. Furthermore, Prokofiev argues that “he was decorated by the Soviet government. Not to know his role equals to rejecting an act of Soviet government. And with this we cannot agree.” It is obvious that the struggle over legitimacy generated a conflict of *partiinost*-s.

⁶² “Stenograma plenarei CC al PMR (30 noiembrie – 5 decembrie 1961), intervenția lui Emil Bodnăraș”, *ibidem*, p. 272.

⁶³ “Notă asupra articolului publicat la 10 martie 1963 în ziarul Neue Zürcher Zeitung”, 13 martie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția Relații Externe, 40/1963, f. 4 in Croitor, *România...*, p. 278.

E. Comrade, Are You Romanian?

In October 1961, the CPSU organized its XXIIth Congress where Khrushchev triggered a second wave of attack again Stalin. *Pravda* summarized the nature of this new push for de-Stalinization: “the Twenty-Second Congress vividly demonstrated that an end has been put in our Party once and for all to the faulty forms and methods of the period of the cult of the individual.”⁶⁴ The most important difference between 1956 and 1961 was that now the attack against Stalin was “in public and over national radio, and he [Khrushchev] was seconded by a succession of like-minded orators.”⁶⁵ Khrushchev excluded the antiparty group (Malenkov, Molotov, Kaganovich, and Shepilov) from the party, thus establishing supremacy within the ruling circle of the CPSU. At the same time, in a worrying development for the RWP’s growing self-centeredness⁶⁶, he lambasted Albanian communists (the Party of Labor of Albania) for their “schismatic, factionalist, and seditious activities.” But this attack also targeted, indirectly, the Chinese, who, through Zhou Enlai, the head of the delegation, expressed their opposition to “Khrushchev’s renunciation of the dogma of the ‘dictatorship of the proletariat’ and announcement that the CPSU would be transformed into a ‘party of all people’ and the Soviet Union into a ‘state of the whole people’.”⁶⁷ Lorenz Lüthi excellently summarized the most important issues behind the Sino-Soviet split:

although China had sought the alliance in 1949 and 1950, Mao eventually pushed for its collapse after 1959, when he decided that it had run the full course of what he considered its usefulness to the country. Moreover, the Chinese leader increasingly linked Sino-Soviet disagreements with his internal disputes. In 1962, the struggle against domestic ideological

⁶⁴ Heer, *Politics and History*..., p. 121.

⁶⁵ Martin Malia, *The Soviet Tragedy. A History of Socialism in Russia, 1917-1991* (New York: Free Press, 1994), p. 339. For example, on the historical front, the XXIIth Congress was followed in November by a general meeting at the Academy of Sciences during which historians discussed its impact. “This was immediately followed by two-day general meetings of the various academic sections to discuss the congress as it related to the various disciplines.” See Heer, *Politics and History*, p.122-123.

⁶⁶ Gheorghiu-Dej, however, would endorse the Soviet position at the November-December 1961 Plenum.

⁶⁷ Tismaneanu, *Stalinism for All*..., p. 172. On the Chinese reaction to the XXIIth CPSU Congress see

revisionism merged with his battle against its counterpart in the policy of the socialist camp toward imperialism.⁶⁸

Following Lüthi argument for the case of China, I place the impact of the second de-Stalinization on Romanian communism in a continuum of changing relations between the CPSU and the RWP. While for the RWP, Soviet backing was a defining alliance, for the CPSU, the present Romanian leadership proved to be an asset during the 1956-1957 Hungarian crisis and in the overall dynamics of the world-communist movement (e.g., the Bucharest meeting in 1960 before the one in Moscow). Once Khrushchev altered his position toward the RWP because of newly developing priorities at the Moscow Center (the re-definition of Comecom's role and nature or deeper integration in the Warsaw Organization Treaty) combined with his heavy-handedness regarding the Chinese and the Albanians, opened the door to an identitarian crisis of a party that intrinsically suffered from a historical legitimacy crisis. Subsequently, the RWP invested a lot of energy in reinventing its position in relation to Moscow at the level of both domestic and international politics.

Overall, the Twenty-Second Congress represented another considerable threat to the position of the RWP leadership, which, despite its stability, was forced to find ways of filling in the talk of de-Stalinization with contents that would not endanger its supremacy in the party or the country. Gheorghiu-Dej and his inner circle found solutions and made them public during the Central Committee Plenum (November 3 - December 5, 1961). There were two directions to go: first, "the Romanian leaders organized the struggle against the consequences of the personality

⁶⁸ Lüthi identified three points of ideological disagreement at the foundation of the Sino-Soviet split: Mao's Great Leap Forward, the campaign of de-Stalinization, and the issue of the correct method of dealing with imperialism. He added that "most other points of Sino-Soviet conflict were either the result of these ideological disagreements or of lesser importance." (e.g., security disputes or territorial squabbles) See Lorenz M. Lüthi, *The Sino-Soviet Split* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2008), p. 2-4 and 9.

cult in such a way to make them seem genuine de-Stalinization *avant la lettre*”⁶⁹; and second, de-Stalinization was placed in a national framework. The so called “Muscovite” group led by Ana Pauker represented the section of the party that had not acted in the interests of the Romanian people. They were those who disregarded the country’s territorial integrity and who despised its people. Therefore, the Dej faction represented not only enlightened, reformed communism, but also party group that until 1961 had consistently defended *national interest*. In other words, it was legitimate both on Marxist-Leninist *and* national bases. The November-December 1961 plenum used most of the historical themes developed in the earlier years, refining them and even imposing others. In 1961, most of the motifs of party history had already crystallized, later years merely providing variations or augmentations of the matters discussed at the Plenum. The resulting image of the party in 1961, after its 40th anniversary and the November-December Plenum, was one of reassured self-centeredness, of a party on its way to full national integration.⁷⁰ The RWP was now based on the “unwavering moral, ideological and political unity of the people”; it embodied the best of its people; and, it defended and accomplished the ideals of the Romanian people - “our remarkable and talented people.” (Gheorghiu-Dej, June 1960)

Emulating Khrushchev, Dej and his inner circle first constructed an anti-party faction that was condemned as “right-wing deviators”. Pauker, Luca, and Georgescu along with Constantinescu and Chişinevschi (Pârvulescu was also added as an accomplice) were described as “a separate group above and beyond the party’s elected institutions, ignoring the Central Committee and the secretariat and replacing the politburo, which functioned almost as a committee.” They had been the main proponents of Stalin’s cult and they “introduced into the

⁶⁹ Tismaneanu, *Stalinism for All*., p 172.

⁷⁰ „Informare cu privire la îndeplinirea Planului de măsuri pentru aniversarea a 40 de ani de la înfiinţarea Partidului Comunist din Romania”, 24 mai, ANIC, Fond CC al PCR – Secţia de Agitaţie şi Propagandă, no.16/1961, ff. 1-6.

party and the state life the methods and practices, alien to Leninism, generated by this cult.” They created “an atmosphere of mistrust and suspicion against valuable Party and state cadres,” who were intimidated and persecuted, because “abuse of power and encroachment of people’s legality characterized the activity of this factional, anti-party group.”⁷¹ But, more importantly for the focus of the present analysis, the new official version of the RWP’s history was tied to matters of national history: August 23rd, Transylvania, and patriotism.

In contrast with the fallacies of this anti-party group, Gheorghiu-Dej was a leader of the same mould as Marx-Engels-Lenin, “at the forefront of the struggle for peace, socialism and communism in [our] country.” He was

the son of the working class, loyal to the party, an example of discipline and arduous work, showing care and appreciation for the cadres, abiding punctiliously the principles of collective work, the work and opinions of his comrades, a constant advocate for the unity of the party. All this comrades is neither cult nor flattery. This is how one should feel about his/her leaders, especially while keeping in mind what happened in other countries and what it was not allowed to develop in our country. This is what every communist should feel, every citizen of our country. Today in our party a healthy and creative life is assured.⁷²

With such a righteous leader, it was only logical that speakers at the Plenum would reach the conclusion that “we are the *only* party among socialist countries where this [arbitrary repressions against the cadres because of the cult of personality] did not happen.”⁷³ Avoiding de-Stalinization by means of re-inventing party history and through self-centeredness brought forth the claim of Romanian communism’s exceptionalism – the fundamental premise of its development and domesticization.

⁷¹ Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, *Articole și cuvântări (iunie 1960-decembrie 1962)* (București: Editura Politică, 1963), pp. 278-279. Also see Tismaneanu, *Stalinism for All*, p.174.

⁷² “Stenograma plenarei CC al PMR (30 noiembrie – 5 decembrie 1961), intervenția lui Petre Borilă” in Cătănuș, *A doua destalinizare*, p. 193. Borilă was at the time member of the CC’s Politbureau and vicepresident of the Council of Ministers.

⁷³ “Intervenția lui Valter Roman”, *Ibidem*, p. 246.

Such fortunate position the RWP was in would be explained on the basis of the specific profile of the present party leadership. Its image was constructed in contrast to the *alterity* of the defeated factions within a referential system of constant alienation from the party spirit to distrust of internal forces based upon an innate estrangement from the Romanian people. The line of argumentation used by the participants at the plenum amounted to a clear ethnicization of socialist patriotism. In one of his interventions, Gheorghiu-Dej declared:

Comrade [Gh.] Stoica she despised the Romanian people. [...] She considered that Romanians are a people of thieves. [...] to say such despicable things about the whole people? What connection did she have with the people? [...] Once she told to some Soviet generals who participated at one of our celebrations. [...] You know, she said to them, you know why Michael the Brave, his statue, has in one hand a hatched and I don't know what in the other hand (I [Dej] never looked to check). You know why he has both hands busy? And he [the Soviet general] asks laughing: Why? So that he wouldn't steal. Because Romanians are thieves. It was a total derision of our people. [...] And the other, Foris [Ștefan], who was lieutenant in the Austrian-Hungarian army, he was sickened when he heard somebody speaking Romanian: 'Let be done with this barbarian, savage language.' He was nauseated.⁷⁴

Moreover, some members of the antiparty faction group were considered not even Romanian communists. Borilă recounted how [Mátyás] Rákosi, during his stay in Moscow in the Second World War, tried to recruit communists from Transylvania, Hungarians, Jews, or of other nationalities, in order to send them to Hungary. But, "he did succeed to lure none of the comrades from Ardeal with the exception of Luca László, who agreed to talk to him. All the other told him that they are members of the Romanian Communist Party."⁷⁵

The de-nationalization of the other, in our case Vasile Luca, functions at three levels: we was not one of the *ardeleni* – a formulation expressing deeper national belonging; his Romanianized name disappears, as Borilă switches back to Luca's Hungarian name; and, as a

⁷⁴ "intervenția lui Gh. Stoica", *Ibidem*, p. 231. The appeal to Michael the Brave as epitome of the Romanian people historical pride was not accidental. As we shall see in the following chapter, by 1960 his role in the national history was already fully established as the first unifier of the people and symbol of the unbreakable and continuous unity of the nation across historical epochs.

⁷⁵ "intervenția lui Petre Borilă", *Ibidem*, p. 186.

climax, he becomes a foreign body in a healthy party. V. Roman, confirming Borilă's story, recounted how Rakosi tried to recruit him as well. Roman's explanation why he refused comes very close to a definition of the 'good communist' in the context of regime individuality: "I replied comrades that I have no connection with Hungary. I enrolled in the Romanian Communist Party, I am a son and a soldier of the communist party in Romania - this is my state. Oradea is part of Transylvania, so it is part of Romania. I have no business there [in Hungary]." ⁷⁶

It was no accident that two members of the RWP coming from national minorities (a Bulgarian – Borilă, and a Jew - Roman) were the ones who formulated the imperative of national belonging so that one would be a good communist in Romania. A similar practice was employed during the 1957 and 1958 purges, when Romanian communists of Jewish origin rebuked accusations that those excluded were targeted because of the anti-Semitism of the party leadership. At the same time, it was a practice that expressed the dialectical balance maintained by Dej between its turn to autochthonousness and internationalism. National belonging was not particularly ethnic; it could also function if premised on *assimilation*, that is, if the individual served the RWP's and the national interests. In other words, belonging was fundamentally defined in terms of loyalty and empathy with the regime and its people.

Indeed, according to the new narrative push forward at the beginning of the 1960s, the anti-party group broke both pledges: of loyalty and of empathy. Their deprecation of the Romanian people and factionalist attitudes instilled among them a lack faith in the capacity of internal forces to bring proletarian revolution and build a popular democracy in Romania. According to Gh. Stoica, "they, especially Ana Pauker, created a line, a position that originated in their distrust of the internal forces, a line against the insurrection from... Gh. Gheorghiu-Dej:

⁷⁶ "intervenția lui Valter Roman", p. 241.

the act of August 23rd.⁷⁷ Pauker was guilty for rejecting the “prison center’s” decision to participate (and lead according to the new mythology) in the arrest of Ion Antonescu and the liberation of Bucharest. She was blamed for her belief that the party had to tail off the advance of the Red Army. The implicit argument here was that Dej and those close him refused to accept this position because they did not want to become forces of military occupation. In contrast to Pauker, they present themselves as revolutionaries from inside and below, rather than from outside and alien to the people. The proceedings revealed the fact, according to Dej, that “as early as the beginning of the war, the party created a platform for united action” that focused on ceasing the war against the Soviet Union, the participation in the war against Hitler, and the achievement of national independence, and on the creation of a government representing all patriotic forces.⁷⁸ Moreover, the armed insurrection prevented Antonescu from dragging the country into a devastating war within its *own* territory. Consequently, the ‘prison center’ avoided both the destruction of Romania and eased significantly the allied war effort. Its contribution was *providential*, therefore essentially legitimizing.

The measuring stick in verifying the connection between a correct party line and the national interest was the “so-called problem of Transylvania” (V Roman). Roman identified five schools of thought in reference to finding a solution for the Transylvanian question.

Ana Pauker said: Starting with the First World War, Romania had only one claim, Ardealul. Is this why comrades the bourgeoisie and the landowners started the war? Is this the correct Marxist-Leninist interpretation of this issue? We well know that the masses began the liberation of Transylvania, both here and there, and not the bourgeoisie. [...] Rakosi put things as follows: Transylvania is Hungarian. It must belong to Hungary. [...] We were on the corridor with Rakosi, Gero, and Nagy Imre and we never could get along on this matter [...] The line of the Comintern during the war, and maybe here I might be mistaken, but we must evaluate carefully this topic, because as early as the IIIrd and IVth Congress [of the PCdR], the position toward Transylvania was to put it in the same basket with Bassarabia. And this approach was suggested both to Hungarians and Romanians. The first who exits the war receives Transylvania. [...] And the fourth position, again in Moscow, belonged to Stalin. It

⁷⁷ “interentia lui Gh Stoica”, *Ibidem*, p. 232.

⁷⁸ “Intervenția lui P Borilă”, *Ibidem*, pp. 151-152.

is true that Stalin considered that Transylvania should be given to Romania. This is the historical truth. [Dej: It is true]. Stalin argument was the following: After the war I need at the periphery of the Soviet Union strong countries. And if I take Transylvania from Romania, the latter will be weak. Well, there is something here, but his reasoning is not based on historical truth. [...] The correct line belonged to those in the country, particularly to those in Târgu Jiu [where Dej was imprisoned, n.a] and the other prisons where our cadres were.⁷⁹

This fascinating passage from the discussions at the November-December Plenum both summarizes and anticipates historiographical development in communist Romania. First, the interpretation of the First World War that was imputed to Pauker reflected the debates in Romania on the correct interpretation of the role of Romania in the war and on the significance of Transylvania's unification with the Romanian kingdom. As we have seen in the previous chapters, the matter was so politically charged that those who argued that the country's participation was just and that the unification was the beginning of contemporary history of the nation were reprimanded. Matters were even more complicated by the fact that an overlapping theme in history-production of a revolutionary situation in Romania from 1917 to 1920, which despite its defeat resulted into the creation of the Romanian Communist Party. Maybe this was the most important obstacle in a wider appreciation on the RWP's part of usable past in Romania's contemporary history. Until 1966, the party line toward 1918 suffered from an overlap of founding narratives: the party's and that of the Nation.⁸⁰ This also explains the heavy reliance on the revolution of 1848, the unification of 1859, or the label on 1877/8 as a just war.

⁷⁹ "Interventia lui V Roman", *Ibidem*, p. 239-240.

⁸⁰ For the development of this debate between 1960 and 1961, see V Liveanu, „Unele probleme privind România în timpul primului război mondial în lumina lucrărilor lui V I Lenin”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 1, an XIII, 1960. pp. 46-76, V Liveanu, *1918. Din istoria luptelor revoluționare din România* (București: Editura Politică, 1960), Clara Cușnir-Mihailovici, *Mișcarea muncitorească din România între anii 1917-1921. Crearea PCR* (București: Editura Politică, 1960), *Greva generală din România – 1920* (București: Editura Politică, 1960), and C. Daicoviciu, L. Banyai, și V. Chereșteșiu, „La Transylvanie pendant la premiere guerre mondiale et son union avec la Roumanie”, *Nouvelles Étude d'Histoire publiées à l'occasion du XIe Congres des Sciences historique*, Stockholm, 1960, pp. 541-567.

From 1955 to 1960, attempts to describe favorably Romania's participation in the First World War fell under the category of right wing deviationism. However, by 1960, slight changes in tone appeared. For example, if one compares Liveanu's interpretation with Cușnir-Mihalovici's will notice that the first altogether rejected the role of the war in the unification, the latter being the result of revolutionary action both internal and external (in Tsarist Russia and in the Hapsburg Empire). The second author advanced an interesting periodization: first the ruling classes get involved in an imperialist war and are defeated (under circumstances of strong popular opposition); second, until November 1918, defeat in the war placed the very existence of the country in question. Therefore, the people gather around the bourgeoisie and succeed the overcome all hardships and instrument the unification with Transylvania. But they are again betrayed by the bourgeoisie, which is bent on exploitation and the imperial expansion. The reversal of roles, from defeated to victorious, allows the ruling classes to crush the internal revolutionary forces. What distinguished the two approaches was that the latter placed greater emphasis on domestic conditions, while the second situated successful revolution only in the context of simultaneous victorious proletarian revolutions both in Russia and in the Hapsburg Empire. By the end of the decade, both of them will be heavily criticized in party journals *Lupta de clasă* and *Analele Institutului de istorie*.⁸¹

Going back to the five positions mentioned by V. Roman, it is important to underline his criticism of the Comintern viewpoint on Transylvania. His intervention along with other remarks made during the 1961 Plenum reveal a gradual change of attitude toward the Comintern

⁸¹ For an extensive critique of the pre-1968 historiography about Romania's participation in the First World War and about the unification of Transylvania with the Romanian kingdom see, for example, Mircea Mușat, „Considerații privind dezvoltarea istoriografiei mișcării muncitorești și a PCR după 23 August 1944”, *Anale de istorie ale ISISP*, an XVIII, nr. 3, 1972, pp. 11-32. The contents of this article were the results of a general session of the Scientific Council of the Institute for Party History (from 1966 the Institute for Historical and Socio-Political Studies - ISISP) on May 12. Mușat also worked at the DPC and along Ion Ardeleanu they will be the main *praktiki* of the Ceaușescu period.

approach first on inter-party relations and second, as a consequence, on the national question. The RWP's Declaration of April 1964 will officially spell out this line: "Starting with the last period of the Comintern's existence it became clear that the problems of working-class movements from one country or another could not be solved by one international center. It did not correspond anymore to the developmental stage of world communist and working-class movements."⁸² Of course, the Comintern was an alter ego for the Moscow center (both then and now) and the RWP distanced itself in order to re-assert its individuality. But it was also a matter of legitimacy with impact upon historiographical discourse. The Comintern labeled Romania as an imperialist state, one that entered the stage of monopolist capital, a multinational state that represented a prison for peoples. Toward the end of the 1960s, the unified nation-state resultant of the First World War would gain its place in the historical progression of unity and homogeneity that set up the conditions for the birth of the socialist nation under communism.

Moreover, the dominant national theme of the 1961 Plenum proceedings, namely the Romanian communists struggle to preserve the nation-state's integrity, was formulated in contrast to the irredentist plans of Hungarian communists based in Moscow, active in the Comintern and later compromised within the world movement. Rakosi, Gero, and Revai were exponents of the excesses of the cult of personality in Hungary, while Imre Nagy was "a reactionary element". At the same time, though Stalin was appreciated for his emphasis on the necessity of strong Romanian nation-state, his position is criticized because it does not accept the fundamental *historical right* of Romanians in Transylvania. Dej provided an excellent characterization of this fallacy. He countered both the Comintern position and gave a caveat to Stalin's interpretation: "even if Romania had not exited the war [before Hungary]. Transylvania

⁸² „Declarație cu privire la poziția Partidului Muncitoresc Român în problemele mișcării comuniste și muncitorești internaționale adoptată de Plenara lărgită a C.C. al P.M.R. din aprilie 1964”, *Scînteia*, nr. 6239, 26 aprilie 1964, p. 3.

was not an empty territory. One must observe what kind of population lives there. We have to follow the feelings of these people. The crushing majority was Romanian and these realities could not be overlooked.”⁸³ Furthermore, the constant association during the proceedings of Ana Pauker and Vasile Luca with Rakosi and his interpretation of the Transylvanian question only reinforces the thesis of the anti-party group *alienness* (what later would be called *alogen*) from the nation. In contrast to the ‘prison center’, Pauker and Luca are described as willing to use Transylvania as a potential bargaining chip in the relations between the two parties. The Plenum’s stenograph shows only one possible correct position embodied in that of Gheorghiu-Dej. And his line was the manifestation of his and the present leadership’s *Romanian-ness*.⁸⁴

The last dominant theme in the emancipatory narrative of the 1961 Plenum was RWP’s position toward the Sovroms and the war reparations. On January 1945, Romania signed a convention with the USSR according to which it took on the responsibility of shipping goods to the Soviet Union as compensation for the military operations in and occupation of Soviet territory. The total sum of the reparations was estimated to 300 million dollars. The same year, the SOVROMs appeared, companies based, in theory, on the parity of Romanian and Soviet capital, but in reality the main institutions through which reparations, goods, and resources were extracted from Romania and the instruments of Soviet control over the Romanian economy. They covered the most important branches of the country’s economy. In the autumn of 1954, 12

⁸³ “Intervenția lui V Roman”, *Ibidem*, p. 242. By 1961, the first volume of the national history treatise was published. One of its fundamental themes was the continuity of the Romanian people, its ethnogenesis centered on Transylvania, the Romanians’ continuity after the Roman retreat, and, implicitly their historical and natural right over the territory. Dej is basically voicing the thesis of the treatise’s first volume.

⁸⁴ Recounting his interactions in 1954 with Rakosi, Roman remembers how the Hungarian leader, exasperated by his correct position toward the Transylvanian question, retorted at one point “you are more Romanian than Romanians.” Dej’s promptly comments to Roman’s remark: “Yeah, and he was more Hungarian than Hungarians.” Like Roman, Rakosi was of Jewish descent as well. A shade of anti-Semitism is apparent in Dej’s remark. *Idem*, p. 243. The November-December 1961 Plenum was the party event where Stalin was quoted to have said that Pauker was “constructing a race party, rather than class party”. *Idem*, p. 92.

of the 16 Sovroms will be disbanded, the rest having the same fate until 1956.⁸⁵ During the 1961 Plenum, Dej, seconded by Ion Gh. Maurer, president of the Council of Ministers, drew a picture of his constant, solitary struggle to convince the Soviets that, because of the harsh conditions of reparations,

people [in the country] were having harder and harder time living, they were growing tired. [...] It was like a vortex that sucked in all goods. And for everything that was shipped we had to pay for transportation even on the Soviet territory. We showed to them the situation, the difficult conditions people lived in, their state of mind, how reactionaries use these things, how they blame the Soviet Union for starving us.⁸⁶

In contrast with Dej's actions in the interest of the people's well being, Pauker and Luca only worsened the country's post-war economy crisis. E. Bodnăraș revealed how Dej was in permanent conflict with them for their support of the activity of the Sovroms. It was far from accidental that the RWP leadership brought up the issue of the post-war Soviet exploitation of Romania. In February 1960, the GDR, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, and Hungary insisted on the implementation at the level of the Comecon of "the theory of international specialization in agricultural production," Romania being one of the latter's targets. The RWP rejected it on the grounds that it implied "the diminishing of the forces of production and it overlooked the existing resources in the name of a principle that can be advantageous only for some and disadvantageous for others."⁸⁷ The interventions at the 1961 Plenum on the problem of the correct line of Soviet-Romanian economic cooperation anticipated the autonomous stand adopted by the RWP starting with 1962 toward Khrushchev's program of division of labor and coordination of economic plans within the Comecon.

⁸⁵ "Reparațiile de război și SOVROM-urile", in Vladimir Tismaneanu, Dorin Dobrinu, Cristian Vasile (coord.), *Raport Final—Comisia Prezidentia pentru Analiza Dictaturii Comuniste în România* (București: Humanitas, 2007), pp. 213-219 and Cioroianu, *Pe umerii lui Marx*, pp. 65-71.

⁸⁶ "Expunerea lui Gh. Gheorghiu-Dej din ședința Biroului Politic", *Ibidem*, pp. 85-86.

⁸⁷ Croitor, *România...*, pp. 214-215. Also see Mioara Anton, *Ieșirea din cerc: politica externă a regimului Gheorghiu-Dej* (București: Institutul de Studii ale Totalitarismului, 2007).

The discussion at the 1961 Plenum constructed a narrative of legitimation for Gheorghiu-Dej and the RWP's leadership based on an overarching *topos* of national belonging that only clarified the general line advanced at the IIIrd Party Congress in 1960. Socialist patriotism gained an essentializing profile for it was the expression of "the love for the country's mountains and rivers, for the land of birth soaked in the blood of generations." These sentiments inevitable coalesced in "the working people's conscience with the love and devotion for the new social order, for the motherland whom they feel to belong to them." Because of the new definition of communal identity, the writings of historians had to make available to the general public "the superb examples of courage and heroism in the Romanian people's struggle for freedom and independence, the true forger of the motherland's history, the creator of its material and spiritual values."⁸⁸ Furthermore, there was no contradiction anymore between the "each people's tendency to develop its national economy, its own culture and state and the initiative for greater economy and political unity of socialist countries."⁸⁹

When the RWP declared at the special plenum of the Central Committee on April 22-25, 1962 and at the special session of the Grand National Assembly (April 27-30) the completion of the material base of the new order and the transition to the fulfillment of socialist construction (*desăvîrșirea construcției socialiste*),⁹⁰ the communis regime had also achieved a metamorphosis of the masternarrative of socialist patriotism. The latter was rooted on the by now obsessive emphasis on the internal forces of historical development, which, in contrast to 1955-1958, were

⁸⁸ „Despre însemnătatea istorică a Congresului al III-lea al Partidului Muncitoresc Român”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 4, an XIII, 1960. p. 13.

⁸⁹ L. Banyai, „V. I. Lenin despre patrie și patriotism”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 1, an XIII, 1960. p. 40.

⁹⁰ At the end of December 1961, the RWP announced the finalization of the “socialist transformation of agriculture”. At the same time, in 1959, Al. Bârlădeanu, vice-president of the Council of Ministers, had designed an plan of long term development (until 1975) focused on intensification of industrialization and on the increase of agriculture's contribution to the national income. See Dorin Dobrinu and Contantin Iordachi (eds.), *Transforming Peasants, Property and Power: The Collectivization of Agriculture in Romania, 1949-1962* (new York/Budapest: CEU Press, 2009) and Dan Cătănuș, „Studiu introductiv”, in Cătănuș, *A doua destalinizare...*, p. 20..

increasingly identified by their national profile, that is Romanian. As the following chapter will show, the nationalization of the history-production will overlap with the party's transition toward a discourse of self-centeredness based on its autochthonous credentials.

The process of the reinvention of the RWP's position and historical track in its relationship with the Moscow center will culminate into revival of *national sovereignty*. Khrushchev's projects of specialization and integration in the Comecom will lead to a formulation of sovereignty over the economic encroachments. The RWP's position was that "the fundamental problems of economic policy" were specific to each country and the only body that could "evaluate and decide these problems is that country's respective party."⁹¹ By the end of 1963, the RWP had found the formula for its line, one that will be circumscribed in definite fashion in the 1964 April Declaration. One of the vital attributes of a socialist state's national sovereignty was economic planning, which was the instrument through which the state accomplished its most important political, social, and economic objectives. Therefore, the planning of the national economy was first and foremost a political attribute. Any transfer in this field meant the subversion of national sovereignty.⁹²

F. With the Founding Fathers on our Side

Sovereignty, however, was not defined only in terms of leadership emancipation and economic self-centeredness. As we had already seen in 1959, 1960, and 1961, it was also formulated in terms of territorial integrity and, more generally speaking, at the level of loyalty to the Romanian state (across history, if we keep in mind the 1859 centennial) that allowed for

⁹¹ "Stenograma ședinței plenare a CC al PMR din 21-23 noiembrie 1962", ANIC, Fond CC al PCR – Cămară, 30/1962, ff. 344-345 in Croitoru, *România...*

⁹² Croitoru, *România*, pp. 240-241.

recognition of national interest (from which the new mythology on August 23rd was derived). The double reference to territory and the people (as Romanian population) allowed for an increased unification of social with national contents within socialist patriotism.⁹³ Historical right would now coincide with civilizing social, political, and economic accomplishment. In this context, the matters of borders and legitimate historical existence became vital. This explains the emphasis in 1961 on the “so-called problem of Transylvania” (Roman). It also brings into the picture the last piece of our puzzle of emancipatory environment constructed by the RWP until 1964: the employment of the founding fathers of Marxism-Leninism for the national cause. We have already run into the invocation, in 1961, of Stalin’s recognition that Transylvania had to belong to Romania.⁹⁴ But the RWP had to make its case even stronger. This is the context within which the drafting, publication, and usage in political and historiographical discourse of *Marx - Însemnări despre români* (Notes on the Romanians) should be situated and explained.

One of the first instances when the Soviet-Romanian relations were shaken by the issue of borders and territorial integrity was Khrushchev’s remark, in Leipzig, in 1959, that “some frontiers are settled others are not.” According to an account of Gheorghiu-Dej in 1963, “he talked about the Oder-Niesse line, about the frontier between Poland and USSR, between Romania and USSR. He did not mention Northern Bukovina because he considered it as part of the reparations for the time when Romanians administered Bessarabia.” To make matters worse, “he says that with Poland we have agreed, we have only one hindrance with Transylvania....We [RWP] could, using this as pretext, start talking about Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina. Would

⁹³ Klaus Bochmann, “Conceptul de patriotism în cultura română”, pp. 103-128 in Victor Neumann și Armin Heinen (eds.), *Istoria României prin concepte. Perspective alternative asupra limbajelor social-politice* (Iași: Polirom, 2010).

⁹⁴ At the Plenum, Dej remembers how at one point Stalin said: “Transylvania will forever belong to Romania.” “Expunerea lui Gheorghiu-Dej”, *Ibidem*, p. 87.

be correct that instead of fighting against these tendencies, to reopen the discussion? Of course it would not be correct.”⁹⁵ But, the Soviet pressure did indicate to the Romanian communist leaders that they had to encourage the development of historiographical narratives that countered any claim questioning the territorial integrity of the nation-state. Below, I will focus only on the involvement of Marx and Engels for the Romanian cause. The following chapter will extensively deal with the connection between history-production and the discourse of natural and political rights.

Notes on the Romanians was a project that was the result of the RWP’s defensive self-centeredness. Its importance should be evaluated at several levels: first, from the point of view of public opinion. The book’s publication accentuated existing Russophobic feeling within the population, playing the card of an established ‘Other’, signaling the communist leadership decision to back a ‘classical’ national cause, while simultaneously maintaining a formal socialist discursive framework. In an excellent contextualization of *Note on Romanians*, O. Silvestru pertinently remarked:

For a public already bored by the aggressive publicity of Marx in the Communist *langue du bois* of the regime, this text came as a shock. Certain passages like “These Provinces withered under the shadow of Russian protection” or “To be suspected of entertaining patriotic sentiments was equivalent to being excluded from public employment; subservience to Russian interests was the sure title of promotion” automatically gave rise to analogies with the contemporary situation.⁹⁶

Indeed, the publication of the *Notes* came in the aftermath of the April 1964 Declaration, the event becoming a sort of historical, though Marxian, corollary to the party document.

Second, the volume influenced the historiographical debates in the context of the writing of the national history treatise. Last but not least, it can be considered the official end of the

⁹⁵ apud Croitoru, *România*, pp. 228-227.

⁹⁶ Octavian Silvestru, “From Romantic Nationalism to National Communism. Marx, AntiRussianism and the Romanian Cause in 1855 and 1964,” *Anuarul Institutului de Cercetări Socio-umane "Gheorghe Șincai" al Academiei Române*, issue XII, 2009, pp.191.

narrative of Soviet-Romanian friendship based on a regressive construction of historical tradition. By mid 1960s, the Tsarist Empire will increasingly bear the brunt of veiled anti-Soviet history-production. Overall however, it needs to be stressed that the practice of employing the founding fathers as interpretative starting points for a changing reality is a characteristic phenomenon of what Brian Kassof coined as “Stalinist epistemology”. According to this cognitive framework,

those with the sharpest perception (i.e., ideological ability)—namely, Marx, Engels, Lenin, and their heir, Stalin—were best able to recognize the true nature of events and information. Those who mastered their works came next; these texts became a type of Rosetta Stone, making the chaos of the world intelligible to those who were able to internalize and properly reapply them to new circumstances.⁹⁷

As evident from the memoirs of Niculescu-Mizil, Marx’s manuscripts represented the scientific validation for the 1964 Declaration. It helped the RWP to avoid further pursuing a clarification of the main tenets in the Declaration. The *Notes* fulfilled the functions of citations, that is, “their specific application to a given situation was subject to ideological interpretation, which was a transrational process, not liable to definition.”⁹⁸ Mizil account is telling in this sense. He makes a permanent connection between RWP’s foreign policy and the process of the *Notes*’ publication. He even recollected a statement putatively made by Dej: “you found elite advocates, next to Marx you brought Engels. I think we will win. [Mizil replies] I learned from the past too, comrade Gheorghiu.”⁹⁹

⁹⁷Brian Kassof, “A Book of Socialism Stalinist Culture and the First Edition of the Bol’shaia sovetskaia entsiklopediia,” *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History*, 6, 1, Winter 2005, p. 84.

⁹⁸ Kassof, “A Book...,” *Ibidem*, p. 93. Also see comments on Stalinist epistemology in Serhy Yekelchuk, “The Archeology of Bolshevik Knowledge, Or the Birth of Stalinism from the Spirit of Grand Cultural Projects,” *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 6, 1 (Winter 2005), pp. 97–106.

⁹⁹ Mizil, *O istorie...*, p. 278. Here Dej makes reference to another document brought to the surface by Mizil and the DPC, namely F. Engeles letter to Romanian socialist I Nădejde. I will discuss this document below as well.

The volume *Marx-Notes on the Romanians* should be evaluated as a symptom. It was not the only such work that was promoted by the RWP. The DPC, in collaboration with the Academy's Institute of History in Bucharest and with the Institute of Party History, prepared other such projects: the two volumes of *Karl Marx, Fr. Engels, V. I. Lenin despre România*, the already mentioned volume *V. I. Lenin about Romania*, and the publication of Fr. Engels letter to Romanian socialist I. Nădejde in the first volume of *Presa muncitorească și socialistă din România*. Starting with 1959, one can find in the DPC's archives documents containing excerpts from the founding fathers of Marxism-Leninism endorsing certain historiographical themes of interest either in the debates surrounding topics of the national history treatise or for the the RWP's discussion with the Soviets. It seems that the process of drafting *Notes on the Romanians* revealed to the communist leadership the salience of such argumentative instruments for the crystallization of a historical narrative meant to sustain the party's discourse of individuality or for backing up an emancipating historiography.

According to Mizil, he was first approached about Marx's manuscripts in Amsterdam sometime in 1957 or 1958. A DPC instructor, P. Lucaci, during his trip to Poland, met a historian, Stanislav Schwann (he studied in Cernăuți), who brought to his attention the documents.¹⁰⁰ In December 1959, a plan drafted by M. Constantinescu, P. Niculescu-Mizil, and P. Țugui addressed to Gheorghiu-Dej instructed that A. Oțetea be sent to Amsterdam in order to approach the respective Institute in relation to K. Marx's manuscript about Romanians. His arrival had been previously announced by a letter from the Academy's History Institute to Amsterdam. The same document indicated that the Institute for Party History should begin gathering material for a collection of writing by Marx, Engels, and Lenin about Romania that

¹⁰⁰ Mizil, *O istorie...*, p. 51 and p. 260.

was to include texts about Transylvania. The Academy's publishing house had to begin publishing the correspondence between N. Bălcescu and I. Ghica, two of the most prominent figures of the 1848 revolution, who lobbied while in exile for the unification of Romanian territories.

This document was a reaction of the DPC to a history of Hungary that had been labeled "brazenly revisionist". Another measure with significant consequences on the historiographical front was the creation of a collective of party experts and historians which main focus would be the history of Transylvania. Among those listed were M. Constantinescu, L. Banyai, V Roman, unnamed historians from Bucharest, and a group of historians from Cluj – Daicoviciu, Cheresteșiu, Pascu, and Silviu Dragomir.¹⁰¹ The last one had been released from prison in 1955, being arrested in the 'dignitaries group.' He was integrated in the History Institute in Cluj in 1956, being involved in at least three fields of national history-production: the Vlachs in the North of the Balkan Peninsula, the union between Romanians and the Catholic Church, and the 1848 revolution in Transylvania. He is a classic case of "has-been" historian fully engaged in the historiographical projects of the communist regime.¹⁰² Dej comments on the plan proposed by the three doyens of propaganda explain why a historian with Dragomir's background was useful:

we should not start a polemic. It has been said many times before, we should approach this problem calmly, because only a scientific work, a description of the scientifically correct interpretation will rebuke (*va veni de hac*) any nationalist or whoever. Even children know

¹⁰¹ L. Răutu, "Notă către tov. Gh. Gheorghiu-Dej", 14 decembrie ANIC, Fond CC al PCR – Secția de Agitație și Propagandă, no.4/1959, f. 121-123. The document has written on it "to be safely kept".

¹⁰² S. Dragomir's pre-1945 biography shows a historian deeply involved in writing history from a nationalist standpoint and a politician having positions at the highest level (e.g. secretary of minister for minorities) during both the neo-fascist Goga-A.C. Cuza government and under Carol II dictatorship in the Miron Cristea government, which implemented anti-Semite legislation. Dragomir was also, along with Rădulescu-Motru and I. Petrovici, one of the drafters of the platform of the Front for National Salvation, Carol II's "totalitarian party". He was also one of the three general secretaries of the FNS. From 1942, he was the director of the Center for Transylvania Studies, a body created for propaganda purposes, to publicize and bring scientific proof for the rights of Romanians over Transylvania. For details see Sorin Șipoș, *Silviu Dragomir – Istoric* (Cluj-Napoca, Fundația Culturală Română, 2002), pp. 53-86, Liviu Pleșa, „Dosarul de Securitate al istoricului Silviu Dragomir”, *Annales Universitatis Apulensis. Series Historica*, tom 9/I, 2005, pp. 217-229.

since elementary school that in Transylvania lived, since most ancient times, people of the same nationality as those in Moldova and Wallachia. And they were a majority of the population. This nobody can change.¹⁰³

In other words, the party and the historians met half-way: the RWP needed specialists in order for the latter to produce the irrefutable demonstrations for the legitimacy of the present communist state. Historians versed in the Romania's cause in historiography, like Dragomir (or Meteș, Lupaș, Giurescu, Zane, Nestor, Pall, V. Papacostea, etc), accepted co-option in order to fulfill their national and scholarly calling.

A DPC document mentioned again in June 1960 the negotiations for the Manuscripts, specifying that the matter should be resolved until August 23rd.¹⁰⁴ Earlier that year, in April, the DPC presented to Gheorghiu-Dej an update of the progress made with Marx's manuscript along with the draft of Engels' unfinished letter to Nădejde. Between February 27th and march 19th, A Oțetea was in Amsterdam at the Institute for Social History accompanied by Stanislaw Schwann, the Polish historian who discovered the texts and who informed the RWP. Three manuscripts were found: an 84 page long manuscript with Marx's notes on the history of Romania, two fragments from his notebooks both of which containing notes of history. Schwann also found the draft of Engels' letter.

At the meeting between the two historians and prof. Rütter, the director of the Amsterdam institute, they agreed to first publish the manuscripts in the original language at the Dutch institution. At the same time, the institute's governing body expressed their condition that the publication in Romanian will be for "strictly scientific purposes with no polemical elements or political advocacies." Nevertheless, Oțetea did obtain that the copies made to the mentioned

¹⁰³ Răutu, „Notă..”, *Ibidem*, f. 122.

¹⁰⁴ „Probleme de rezolvat pe perioada 1 iulie – 23 august a.c.”, 28 iunie, ANIC, Fond CC al PCR – Secția de Agitație și Propagandă, no.2/1960, f. 117.

manuscripts would not be distributed or published in any other country; “the interdiction refers first and foremost to the USSR with whom the Institute was already in negotiations for an exchange of copies.” Oțetea and Scwann returned afterwards to Bucharest, where, at the Institute for Party History, it was agreed that the volume will be published in co-authorship, as the copyright for Schwann was to be fully acknowledged.¹⁰⁵ The details provided by the last document offer an interesting corrective of the account provided by Niculescu-Mizil in his memoirs. He contended that it was Dej’s decision to present the volume only as a scientific endeavor. It seems that the RWP was compelled by the terms of the agreement with the Amsterdam Institute to publish it only as a scholarly work. Nevertheless, Mizil’s recollection of Dej’s remarks is indicative for the increasing appreciation that the communist leader had for the usefulness of national history-production: “we don’t meddle politically; this is a matter of science. [...] We only follow history. (*Pe istorie mergem*).”¹⁰⁶

There were four editions of the Marx’s volume. The evolution of its title is telling for the gradual change of scope of national historiography. The first edition, in 1961, was entitled “Karl Marx about Romanians (manuscripts)”. The second, “Karl Marx – Notes on some works on the history of Romania” (1962). Only the third will finally have the last form of the title – “Karl Marx about Romanians” (1964). The fourth, in 1965, was an edition for bibliophiles.¹⁰⁷ These tribulations remind of the debates about the right title of the national history treatise, whether it should be “history of Romania” or “history of Romanians”. The second option was rejected because the RWP believe it had a chauvinistic-nationalist character. In the context that *Notes on the Romanians* was also used to bolster the RWP’s position in its squabbles with the Soviet over

¹⁰⁵ „Informație pentru tov. Gh. Gheorghiu-Dej (Anexă: ciorna scrisorii neterminate a lui Fr. Engels către I. Nădejde)”, ANIC, Fond CC al PCR – Secția de Agitație și Propagandă, no.13/1959, ff. 1-6.

¹⁰⁶ Mizil, *O istorie...*, p. 51.

¹⁰⁷ *Idem*, pp. 263-264.

the country's territory and over historical rights, in other words, the volume made explicit references to Bessarabia as a land inhabited by Romanians, the title would differ from the one of the treatise. The increasingly national political discourse of Romanian communism will lead to a change of perspective under N Ceaușescu. When a new project for a national history treatise appeared in the second half of the 1970s, its title was "history of the Romanians", as its scope went beyond the borders of the communist nation-state.

Notes on the Romanians was not without problems however. The manuscript was hardly a developed work. It also relied extensively on French historian Elias Regnault's book *Histoire politique et sociale des Principautés Danubiennes*, which in its turn drew extensively from authors like Nicolae Bălcescu, Ion Ghica, Ion Heliade Rădulescu, or Jean Alexandre Vaillant.¹⁰⁸ Furthermore, Silvestru has convincingly shown in his article that Marx's "annotations do not 'contain' reading notes and excerpts from Regnault; they are exclusively that." At the same time, Regnault's adaptation of the material found in the works of the Romanian authors was minimal.¹⁰⁹ This situation compelled Oțetea to underline in the introduction that Marx interpreted Regnault's material "in a scientific manner, from the point of view of scientific materialism" and therefore the annotations "express, on all the broad issues to which they refer, the point of view of Marx himself."¹¹⁰ Situating Marx's opinions within the founding father's general interpretation of national movements in Eastern Europe and his preference big, centralized states, Silvestru considers that Marx's sympathy for the Romanian national cause is not evident.¹¹¹ The bottom line, however, is that the overall impact of the volume and specific sections of it validate

¹⁰⁸ „Informație pentru tov. Gh. Gheorghiu-Dej..”, *Ibidem*, f. 3 and Silvestru, “From Romantic Nationalism..”, *Ibidem*.

¹⁰⁹ Silvestru, “From Romantic Nationalism..”, *Ibidem*, p. 181 and p. 186.

¹¹⁰ Karl Marx, *Însemnări despre români: (manuscrise inedite)* (București: Editura Academiei RPR, 1964) p. 4. Also see Silvestru, *Idem*.

¹¹¹ Silvestru, *Ibidem*, pp. 190-191.

the claim of invoking Marx for the purpose of national historiographical revisionism. The “Romanian cause” gained the upper hand in contradistinction with an obvious Russophobic nature of Marx’s notes.

According to Marx, “Romanian language is a sort of oriental Italian” and the majoritarian people living in Wallachia, Moldova, Transylvania, Banat, and Bessarabia are Romanians. He even provided statistical data to back his argument. The ones living outside the Principalities “used the term our country for Moldo-Wallachia.” At the same time, the Romanians from the two Principalities were crushed by taxes that only “Russians could regulate in an organic law”, who are characterized as an “oriental demi-monde.” Romanians in general were presented as oppressed by imperial entities from all corners: Russians, Ottomans, Hapsburgs, and their own boyars. An important part of the manuscript dealt with the Transylvania. The DPC even created a document with excerpts from the sections on Transylvania. The main themes in the passages selected by the DPC are: Hungarians found the Romanians when they first arrived in Transylvania; Hungarians wrongly consider that Transylvania is a territory that should be integrated in Hungary; Romanians are a “tolerated nation”; the mutual empathy between Romanians in Transylvania and those in Moldo-Wallachia; in 1847 the Hungarian Diet totally despised Romanians, its tyranny was remorseless; the Hungarian nation wished to establish itself on the ruin of the other nationalities; L. Kossuth’s revolutionary quality is completely dismissed; S. Bărnuțiu is quoted with his remark that nations should collaborate only if they are free nations; the Blaj gathering of the 1848 Romanian revolutionaries in Transylvania is extensively presented; the cruelty of the Hungarian landlords is presented as the cause of the Horia, Cloșca, and Crișan peasant rebellion; the Transylvanian literary movement of the end of 18th century and

the beginning of the 19th is described.¹¹² Overall, using Marx, the party document created a chronology of what it will be coined in the history treatise “the Romanians’ struggle of national and social emancipation and liberation” in Transylvania.

Regarding Bessarabia, the usefulness of Marx is clear here as well. He stated that, despite the 1812 treatise, the Ottoman Empire had no right to cede the territory to tsarist Russia, because it “cannot give up what it does not belong it.” Moreover, by signing the 1854 convention with Austria, which allowed the latter to occupy the Principalities, the Ottomans effectively renounced their suzerainty over these territories. At the same time, the Russian “occupation and plunder of Bessarabia [in 1812] dashed all illusions.” These remarks about the Tsarist Russia were seconded by Engels observations to Nadejeda. According to the other founding father, “we all have before us the same great obstacle that hinders the free development of all nations and of each nation individually. [...] Its name is the Sacred Alliance...under the supreme and ultimate command of Russian Tsarism. [...] Russia nowadays is the great resource of European reactionarism.” Once the Russian Empire would disappear, “the noble Great Russian nation will not chase the chimeras of conquest for the use of the Tsar.”¹¹³

The DPC would proceed to add to this ABC of canonical texts that could be used to justify historical revisions toward a national masternarrative. In 1960, a document gathered quotations from published works of Marx, Engels, *and* Lenin. They will be extensively used in the volume of the history treatise. I will refer to them in the following chapter. What I want to point to, at the moment, is the last quote, belonging to Lenin: “only the small Balkan states can be considered national, without forgetting that here too the population of different nationality

¹¹² „Însemnări inedite ale lui Karl Marx cu privire la anul revoluționar 1848 în Țările Române”, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.33/1960, ff. 1-7.

¹¹³ „Informație pentru tov. Gh. Gheorghiu-Dej..”, *Ibidem*, ff. 6-7.

counts from 5 to 10 percent, that a huge number of Romanians and Serbians (as compared to the population of the respective nation) live outside the borders of their state, that bourgeois-national 'state building' has yet to be finalized". The author of the compilation concluded that Lenin's entire work "validates the idea of a revolutionary forging or completion of the national state."¹¹⁴ The circle was complete. All founding fathers of Marxism-Leninism (with Stalin on the side, but sometimes fashionably unquotable) certified for the correct line adopted by RWP to pursue building socialism in one country, which in itself was the necessary completion of historical development of the Romanian people – a national, revolutionary state.

Two brief observations should be made in reference to *Notes on the Romanians*. The first public presentation of the sections of the text, as far as my findings go, was on June 8, 1961. A. Oțetea held the lecture "K. Marx and the Romanians" at the Bucharest History Museum at a session of the Society for Historical Sciences and Philology. The institutional framework was not accidental. The Society was the organization that brought together all historians and history teachers (in Bucharest in this case, for it was only that section), thus creating a significant potential for dissemination. One can also presuppose that the first two editions were made available to trusted historians. During the drafting of the volume, Oțetea was also helped by Cornelia Bodea and Gr. Zane. Bodea had been criticized by L. Răutu in May 1958 for her treatment of the 1848 revolution. Now, in the following years, she worked at a document that endorsed her 1957-1958 research. Zane was another historian that, though initially arrested by the communists, he will be rehabilitated and recuperated for the purpose of establishing and reinforcing a historiography of the Nation under socialism. He will be integrated at the Academy's Institute of History in Bucharest. In 1959, he will submit the forth volume of Nicolae

¹¹⁴ „Marx, Engels, Lenin. Unele aprecieri ale clasicilor marxismului despre istoria țărilor românești: Valahia, Moldova, Transilvania”, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.34/1960, ff. 17-18.

Bălcescu's complete works, an assignment given with party endorsement and published in 1964. By 1965, the Securitate profiled him as "an element loyal to the regime". The same year he will become standing member of the RPR Academy.¹¹⁵

We have only one account that mentions changes undergone in the IIIrd volume of the national history treatise along the lines of the account presented in the *Notes*. Of course, most of them were aimed at a dimming of the positive role of Russia in the history of Romania.¹¹⁶ At the same time though, some of the themes from the *Notes* can be found in both the IIIrd and IVth volumes. One should not forget though that, as Silvestru correctly remarked, Marx's notes were based on Regnault's book, who in his turn relied heavily on 19th century romantic historiography. Around the same time when Marx's manuscript was brought in Romania, party leaders or editorial articles employed a plethora of quotations from Kogălniceanu and Bălcescu. The RWP was increasingly using the dominant themes of this historiography as foundation for its socialist patriotism. At the same time, the historians' debates on various topics touched upon by the *Notes* show swift shifts toward interpretations similar to that of Marx's. One, however, has to keep in mind that these viewpoints had been constantly expressed among historians since 1956. Nevertheless, even if the *Notes* influence was not direct, there was indeed a diachronic synchronicity between this volume and the history treatise.

G. Conclusion: Toward a Common Ground

Between 1959 and 1963, the RWP increasingly strove toward crystallizing the identity of its regime. Under the pressure of de-Stalinization and of Khrushchev's redefinition of the nature

¹¹⁵ Gh. Zane, *Memorii: 1939-1974* (București: Expert, 1997) and I. Opreș, *Istoricii și Securitatea*, vol. II..., pp. 239-287.

¹¹⁶ Constantiniu, *De la Răutu și Roller...*, p. 273-275.

of the Soviet bloc (Comecon and the WTO), the communist leadership turned toward self-centeredness. It simultaneously tried to found its rule on Marxist-Leninist credentials (industrialization, collectivization, cultural revolution, rejection of revisionism) *and* on national integration (1959 Centennial, integrity of Romanian territory, historical rights). As one scholar remarked, the RWP decided to “become not only the embodiment of industrial development, but also of national aspirations for independence.”¹¹⁷ Subsequently, during these years, socialist patriotism was increasingly Romanianized in the political discourse. *Partiinost* also took the form of loyalty and empathy with national interest.¹¹⁸ The by-product of these developments was a greater identification with the Romanian core. In its attempt to only go through the motions of de-Stalinization, while continuing the pursuit of its “developmental tasks” (Jowitt) in the context of stability of rule, Gh. Gheorghiu-Dej and his inner circle validated the return of the Nation into officially sanctioned discourse. The process of regime symbolic reinvention resulted in an emerging defensive nationalism that will be fully validated with the April 1964 Declaration and which will find a resourceful reservoir of usable past within an ever regressive history-production.

All things considered, the RWP did maintain its radically transformist ethos. The Dej leadership continued to mobilize the population through social change, but the values it increasingly advocated were inclusionary as well. Now, the state that initiated and guided the population’s mobilization sought for identification beyond class limits. Romanian communism claimed national authenticity, besides being “true Marxist-Leninist”. The new driving force of

¹¹⁷ Michael Shafir, *Romania: Politics, Economics and Society. Political Stagnation and Simulated Change* (London: Frances Pinter Publishers, 1985), p. 48.

¹¹⁸ Terry Martin extensively discusses the role of loyalty to socialist construction, defined as a state-building project centered on a high national culture, in the crystallization of communist xenophobia. See Terry Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire*, pp. 412-420.

history was now the moral-political unity of the Romanian people around the party. The RWP's historical legitimacy deficit domestically doubled by its constant defensiveness toward the CPSU after 1956 created the premises for the creation of a master narrative of an entire society engaged in a struggle for survival that was built on total dedication and engagement in the body politic. With the groundwork of the new social order completed a mass sense of identity was possible that had to go further and deeper than a mere proletarian, Soviet-like ethos.¹¹⁹ Shying away from ideological reform, now the regime preferred to look inward through a remodulation of ideological appeals. The historians were already on the front, boots laced up and ready for battle.¹²⁰

¹¹⁹ David Brandenberger, *National Bolshevism* and David Brandenberger, "Stalin's Populism and the Accidental Creation of Russian National Identity," *Nationalities Papers*, 38: 5 (2010), pp. 723-739.

¹²⁰ I am paraphrasing Nekrich's description of Isaak Mints, quoted in Elaine Mackinnon, "Writing History for Stalin. Isaak Izrailevich Mints and the *Istoriia grazhdanskoi voiny*," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 6, 1 (winter 2005), p. 51.

V

National History: The People's Cultural Tradition

A. Stalinism and Bringing Back the Nation

On November 1955, after the RWP Second Party Congress, a historians' conference was promptly organized for the purpose of discussing the situation and priorities of the front. It brought together the members of the Academy, the deans and the various chairs of the four university departments in the country, a large group of researchers, and the Academy's Secretariat. It was presided by the Minister of Education, academician Ilie Murgulescu. The event anticipated the crystallization of the various camps within the historical front. Its main result was that the proceedings clearly indicated the treatise would not be M. Roller's prerogative. It was to be coordinated by the Minister of Education, a decision with significant value in terms of the popularization of the resultant national narrative. The removal of an overt authorization from party circles (e.g., the publication of the treatise with the stamp of the Central Committee or the Institute of Party History) served the function of broadening "the acceptable areas of evidence and interpretation." This symbolic change reasserted the focus on imposing the treatise as the product of a scholarly collective authorship under party supervision.¹

From the beginning, during conference, Roller came under fire on two fundamental issues: his textbook and the title of the treatise. On the second issue, A. Oțetea and C. Daicoviciu succeeded in imposing the version of "Treatise of the History of Romania" versus "The History

¹ I am adopting here the argumentation developed by Nancy Heer in her discussion of the fact that the new PCSU history textbook (1959) went to press without the official sponsorship of the Central Committee. See Heer, *Ibidem*, p. 140-141.

of the RPR”. On the first matter, the situation was much more complex. On the one hand, the treatise was perceived as an endeavor that had to be the opposite of the textbook. On the other hand, in the context of incipient de-Stalinization at the Moscow center, the principle of textbooks as authoritative tools of comprehensive history was revised *across* the entire Soviet bloc. For example, on April-May 1955, at a conference of the institutes of party history/Marxism-Leninism, representatives from Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, GDR, Poland, Romania, Albania, and Hungary discussed the new priorities in writing party history textbooks. The model was still Stalin’s *Short Course*, but the calls for ideological vigilance and unwavering opposition to bourgeois historiography were accompanied by two further premises: the first was the primacy of competence and objectivity; the second was that party history had to be integrated into national working-class history and into the progression of internal democratic struggles.² Therefore, it could be argued that the compulsion of blueprint-based history-production was tempered through the domesticization of history-writing. And once the *Short Course* lost its axiomatic value, with the 20th CPSU Party Congress, this principle of production from within (national specialists working on domestic issues and national genealogies) opened the door to drawing “a national path to socialism” via historiography (either party or general).

In a previous chapters I showed how *rollerism* collapsed, one the one hand, because of the re-definition of the historians’ craft, and on the other, because of its association with what Stalin once called “vulgar sociologism,” which implicitly situated it outside of the new focus narratives geared toward regime individuality. As Nancy Heer noted for the case of the Soviet Union after 1956, there was a newer emphasis on “the discovery and portrayal of historical *truth* (albeit truth in a Marxist frame) at the expense of those who considered that the discipline’s main

² Müller, *Ibidem*, pp. 77-78.

“aim or focus remained on *control*.”³ Roller’s reply to the critics of his textbook’s 1956 edition is an excellent exemplification of this rift: “if some will argue that in 1954 we could have produced from scratch a new textbook, I demand that they should be verified by the party’s control commission in order to find out what they are hiding.”⁴ He could not adjust to the transformation of both the objective and method of historical writing.

In the second half of the fifties, the class principle was giving way to a more syncretic approach situating events, personalities, and meaning within the context of the epoch of their unfolding. In other words, history was not only a matter of class, for it had to also consider “the national particularities of the development of specific peoples.”⁵ The objective was to find a balance between the Marxist-Leninist interpretation and the landmarks of collective remembrance about the national past. The historian would thus become a helpmeet of the Party, not merely its spokesperson or handmaiden. Under the circumstances, the historical front could add a novel facet to its profile: conditional autonomy of epistemic dynamics.

The formation of the polycentric front and the historians’ creative interaction with the organs of party control (especially the Central Committee’s Department for Propaganda and Culture) was now founded on the principle that the scientific quality of history production lay not only on its reliance on historical materialism, but also on the rigorous usage and interpretation of documents, and, subsequently on the correct contextualization of the ensuing facts. *Partiinost* did not run counter to the presupposed methodological objectivity of historiography. The writing of the national history treatise was perceived by the up-and-coming

³ Nancy Heer, *Ibidem*, p. 152.

⁴ Mihalache, *Ibidem*, p.109-110. Also see Marian Ștefan, Gh. Neacșu, „Mihail Roller despre Mihail Roller III”, *Curier Național Magazin*, nr. 103, 9-15 august 1993, p. 10.

⁵ Formula used by an editorial in *Voprosy filosofii* in 1948 criticizing philosophers weary of exaggerated praise for Russian thought. See in Erik van Ree, “Stalin as a Marxist Philosopher”, *Studies in East European Thought* 52: 2 (2000), p. 292.

leaders of the historical front as the opportunity to right the wrongs that hindered, until 1955, the scientific progress of Romanian historiography. Subsequently, *Rollerism* was labeled “circumstantialist” (*conjuncturistă*) historiography. By 1957, the party was trying hard to distinguish it from the implementation of *partiinost* on the historical front: “Among some historians who are party members and working at the RPR Academy’s institute of history persists a misperception about the relationship between historical truth and the upholding of *partiinost* in historiography. They mistakenly associate the latter with the circumstantialist writing of history.”⁶ The creative employment of Marxist-Leninism turned into a doctrinal umbrella for the thematic realignment of the historical field.

However, the transformation undergone by history-production is only partly explained by the changing tides of de-Stalinization. Two developmental trajectories of the communist regime in Romania have to be taken into account. Following the analysis of the previous chapters, the dynamics of the historical front were dependent first, on the continuation of the Soviet model, and second, on the shifting political self-representation of the RWP within the world-communist movement. The RWP’s leadership pursued a path of reinforcing its rule by means of combining building socialism in one country with crafting of a communal sense of identity founded on national interest and progress, loyalty and pride. This transformation was rather a continuation; it was Stalinism in a national context. And, similarly to the Soviet Union (from 1936 until 1953), it presupposed a great deal of cultural revisionism.

For Stalin, cultural revolution was subordinate to, and virtually identical with, the needs of industrialization. It was the ultimate form of mobilization. In Romania, it had been used accordingly from 1945 until 1955 for purposes of revolutionary breakthrough. In the second half

⁶ Pavel Țugui, „Informație privind probleme..”, *Ibidem.*, f. 7.

of the fifties, though, the RWP gradually redefined the function of industrialization, and of planning in general, in the sense that these policies were more and more tightly connected to regime individuality and a Romanian path to building socialism. Subsequently, cultural revolution will be transform into the ideological background for the syncretic revival of the past.⁷ The first wave of Sovietization, in itself a program of modernization according to a Marxist-Leninist worldview, did generate massive “loss of sense and meaning”. The counter-reaction could not surprise: a gradual and selective re-enchantment with the past.⁸

On the historical front this alienation was perceived as both de-professionlization and estrangement from the national tradition. In 1957, a DPC report offered an excellent diagnosis of the state of things: “there have been tendencies to vulgarize history, to replace thorough research of historical documents with agitational formulae, by preconceived ideas and unfounded statements. The analysis of various social classes in the process of understanding historical events and the presentation of important personalities have been done many a times in erroneous fashion from circumstantialist positions.”⁹ This evaluation mirrors Stalin’s observation during the discussions, in mid 1930s, about a middle school history textbook in the Soviet Union: “what the heck is ‘the feudal epoch,’ ‘the epoch of industrial capitalism,’ ‘the epoch of formations’ – it’s all epochs and no facts, no events, no people, no concrete information, not a name, not a title, and not even any content itself [...] History must be history.”¹⁰ History-production had to create models, to generate empathy, and to nourish a common sense of identity rather than merely

⁷ Z. Sochor quoted Henry Burger, who defined “syncretism” as a form of “cultural interaction which involves belending, combining, reconciling” that ultimately results in a “mutual modification of innovation and of host”. See Zenovia A. Sochor, *Revolution and Culture. The Bogdanov-Lenin Controversy* (Ithaca/London: Cornell University Press, 1988), p. 224.

⁸ Jorn Rusen, “Some Theoretical Approaches to Intercultural Comparative Historiography,” *History and Theory*, Vol. 35, No. 4, Theme Issue 35: Chinese Historiography in Comparative Perspective. (Dec., 1996), pp. 21.

⁹ „Informație privind situația în domeniul Stiințelor Istorice”, 24 iunie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no. 7/1957, f. 27.

¹⁰ Brandenberger, *National-Bolshevism*, p. 34.

judge and castigate the past. To paraphrase P. Țugui, the head of the Science and Culture Section of the Central Committee, from 1955 onwards, history was given a patriotic task.

As early as 1955, party representatives signaled that the basis for an identitarian master-narrative was missing. The situation had to be solved by means of “debates regarding the teaching of the RPR history in university, discussions about the formation of the Romanian people and language, the creation of the Romanian nation and some problems related to the process of building a socialist nation.”¹¹ The fundamental premise, based on Khrushchivite lingo, was that the people were the reality of the state. Consequently, socialist patriotism and the moral-political unity of the people became the driving forces of the building of socialism. Once these amorphous categories gained Romanian coloring, the Nation as a master symbol entered the political discourse of the country’s communist regime.

The regime considered the nation to be a development of modernity. Following Marx, historians argued that the Romanian nation had appeared in the second half of the 19th century, its official birth date being the 1859 unification. It was a historical category that was based on “a stable community historically constituted, on language, territory, an economic life and a shared feeling of community.” According to the historian using Stalin’s definition, the continuity of language and of the knowledge of being one people on the Danubian-Carpathian territory existed throughout history. Once a common, Romanian economic marked appeared, the creation of the nation-state became a historical necessity. What needs to be emphasized is that communal-cultural constituents of the nation were seen as constants across history: “despite political separatism, the Romanian people have always been conscious of their origin and language.”¹²

¹¹ “Dare de seamă asupra activității științifice a Academiei RPR pe anul 1954”, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.24/1955, f. 67.

¹² A. Oțetea, „Însemnătatea istorică a Unirii”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 1, an XII, 1959, pp. 27.

Historiography's focus on continuity and originality of culture and of kinship paved the way for the entrenchment of production centered on the principle of historical rights, which implicitly reinforced the regime's discourse of self-centeredness, thus substantiating a systemic "story of identity" (Brandenberger & Platt).

Under the circumstances, I argue that the developing identitarian master-narrative under communism in Romania was the result of both party instrumentalization of the past *and* rebirth of national culture and tradition by cumulative epistemic production. Moreover, this narrative's fusion with building socialism in one country was a symptom of Stalinism. Stalin did grant significant weight to the national factor in historical development. The Soviet leader considered that some institutions, like language, developed without sudden revolutionary jumps. Both the national factor and language "served society as a whole, rather than specific classes, and remain[ed] intact throughout the capitalist and socialist eras."¹³ Such reasoning allowed for a reduction of the economic and class factors in human society.¹⁴ In the 1930s, Stalin stressed the importance of ideas in history:

the *enormous role* of new social ideas, new political institutions, a new political power, which are called to abolish by force the old productive relations. [...] It does not follow from Marx's words that social ideas [...] do not produce a reverse influence on social being [...]. We have been speaking so far about the *source* of social ideas [...], about their *origin*, about the fact that the spiritual life of society constitutes a reflection of the conditions of its material life. As regards the *significance* of social ideas [...], as regards their *role* in history, historical materialism not only does not deny but, on the contrary, emphasizes their serious role.¹⁵

According to Stalin, the role of ideas rested on their potential for progressiveness. Their significance lied in the historical phenomena that they generated in synergy with the development of the forces of production. The socialist order could then endorse the progressive

¹³ van Ree, "Stalin as a Marxist ...", p. 260.

¹⁴ Anton Donoso, 'Stalinism in Marxist Philosophy', *Studies in Soviet Thought* 19 (1979).

¹⁵ Van Ree, "Stalin as a Marxist", p. 284.

materializations of ideas in history because in this way a sense of continuity was constructed, which validated the claim that national heritage was unbroken.¹⁶

The “science wars” (Pollock) of late 1940s and early 1950s in the Soviet Union, especially the philosophy, linguistics and economics debates, provided the theoretical backbone to Stalin’s re-assessment of the relationship between basis and superstructure in a society’s historical development. The most important departure from earlier orthodoxy came with Stalin’s articles on linguistics in June and July 1950. Their premise was that languages have individual evolutions dependent on national traditions and interests. Subsequently,

language was neither part of the economic base nor part of the political or cultural superstructure. [...] language served all classes and all societies, regardless of economic systems. In fact, the Russian language had “remained basically the same” despite radically different superstructures associated with the periods of feudalism, capitalism, and socialism [...] Languages were used by societies in all stages of their economic development; thus language served all classes and in fact was indifferent to class.¹⁷

Stalin’s clarification of this thesis inherently led him to reject the viewpoint that thought and language were separated. Consciousness was not therefore itself material; it was not one and the same phenomenon with matter. Through its connection with language, consciousness would be an epiphenomenon of the historical development of each nation, of the social system of a given country.¹⁸

Placing language and consciousness autonomous of the superstructure, by not tying them to the mode of production, Stalin changed the manner of understanding history. According to him, the superstructure did not have an “indifferent attitude towards the fate of its basis. [...] it contributes actively to the formation and strengthening of its basis, takes all measures in order to

¹⁶ James von Geldern, “Conclusion. Epic Revisionism and the Crafting of a Soviet Public,” pp. 325-345 in Kevin M.F. Platt and David Brandenberger eds., *Epic Revisionism. Russian History and Literature as Stalinist Propaganda* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2006).

¹⁷ Ethan Pollock, *Stalin*, pp. 124-125.

¹⁸ Erik van Ree, “Stalin as a Marxist...”, p. 268

help the new system to ruin and liquidate the old basis and the old classes.”¹⁹ In this context, national character, through its fundamental indicators language and consciousness, had a determining role in the historical progress of a particular society. This position also allowed for an ‘assimilationist’ stand under socialism. An individual’s integration and empathy for the latter’s national culture created the possibility for an expansive, rather than exclusive, pattern of belonging (of course, as long as the latter was not also premised on ethnicity).²⁰

For Stalin, national character was the “mentality [*dukhovnyi oblik*] of the people who come together in a nation.” It was transmitted over time, as a “psychological makeup [*psikhicheskii sklad*] that was formed among them from generation to generation as a result of identical conditions of existence.”²¹ In other words, national character was for him a developmental category for it depended on the conditions of social life. It had therefore the potential of accelerating a community’s evolution. A people could be mobilized, on the basis of its historically perceived character, for the realization of Progress, which culminated with the socialist nation. By combining a historically embedded myth of unity with that of discipline and mobilization, Stalin developed what David Priestland called “a new form of elitist revivalism, based on a non-class ‘national’ or ‘popular’ (*narodnyi*) form of mobilization: the unified *narod*, now no longer divided by class, embodied socialism, and was to achieve heroic feats in the struggle against largely external enemies.”²² The construction of socialism in one country was

¹⁹ *Apud* van Ree, *Ibidem*, p. 293.

²⁰ This side-effect of Stalin’s articles on linguistics is documented by the letters he received from readers requesting further clarification on identity markers. In one of the letters, Stalin is asked “Who should determine the national affiliation of a Soviet citizen whose language, culture, etc belong to one nation, but whose origin is connected to another?” Stalin did not reply. See Pollock, *Stalin...*, p. 130.

²¹ Erik van Ree, “Heroes and Merchants. Stalin’s Understanding of National Character,” *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 8, 1 (Winter 2007), p. 57.

²² David Priestland, *Stalinism*, pp. 249.

rested upon membership in one heroic nation. The consequence of these re-assessments was obvious: “the Russian people were assuming the mantle of vanguard nation.”²³

If one puts together Stalin’s observations on language and consciousness and on the role of national character in history, we can better understand the ideological presuppositions of the principle of building socialism in one country. The people who are the agents of socialist construction apply Marxism-Leninism but enrich it with the historical experience based upon the developmental traditions rooted in their collective consciousness. Indeed, Stalin perceived it likewise. In 1938 he declared that “after all, how did theory develop? On the basis of a generalization of experience. How does experience originate? Either in practice in a laboratory or in practice among the masses. People are also a laboratory.”²⁴ A decade later, he would add, “Marxism cannot help but be enriched by new experience, by new knowledge; consequently, its individual formulas and conclusions must change with the passing of time, must be replaced by new formulas and conclusions corresponding to new historical tasks.”²⁵ The new axiom of “creative Marxism” should not be read only in a future oriented key. It functioned regressively as well, under circumstances of functional re-readings of the past. As the “Introduction to Survey of the History of Historical Science in the USSR” (1954) stated, “Marxist-Leninist historical science holds that the only correct approach is to study the historical process in close relation of the past with the present.” Moreover, the same science, through its connectedness and knowledge of the past provided “most valuable material for scientific forecasting of future historical process and the future destinies of nations”. In this vein, history was the study of “the past of human society in uninterrupted relation to the contemporary life of peoples”, the establishment of “the

²³ David Brandenberger, *National Bolshevism...*, p. 44.

²⁴ Erik van Ree, “Stalin as a Marxist..”, p. 281

²⁵ Pollock, *Stalin...*, p. 129

laws of the development of society at the various stages of its existence”, and the “revealing in their inception of those phenomena which will determine the subsequent course of events.”²⁶

In situating national character, language, and culture in co-determination with the evolution of social life, Stalinism appended the people to the principle of mobilization toward constructing socialism. The progressiveness of such final goal of History elevated the people engaged in this endeavor to national pre-eminence at the world stage. In this context, the task of history-production was to constantly probe for ideological resources that could enrich or confirm Marxism-Leninism, the cardinal scientific complex making development possible.

Mapping out the connection that Stalin established between national identity and socialist construction holds crucial relevance for the Romanian context. It further clarifies the theoretical presupposition for the RWP’s search for a usable past beyond the history of the party, the tradition of working-class movements, and in contrast with Soviet symbolic hegemony. As I have shown in the previous chapter, the RWP developed a political discourse centered on mobilization, national interest, and loyalty as mechanisms of re-asserting its political and historical right to building socialism in Romania. This in turn, opened the door to the proliferation of a “pragmatic history” that could confer historical legitimacy to the party’s leadership and plan for modernization.

Second, the clarification of the theoretical shifts of late Stalinism is the background for understanding the possibilities of writing back the Nation in history-production under communism. As we have seen above, the ideological code of the model that the RWP attempted to implement in local context presupposed a crucial role in historical development for language and consciousness. Therefore, historiography had the possibility of establishing the necessary

²⁶ “Introduction to Survey of the History of Historical Science in the USSR, Vol. I (1954)” in Pundeff (ed.), *History in the U.S.S.R.*, pp. 1966-199.

ethno-cultural genealogies that would materialize the national identity of the people who was building socialism. The latter would receive a frame of reference other than that of proletarian internationalism or the emulation of the experience of the “First Workers’ State”. In an issue of *Studii* that celebrated fifteen years of history-writing under the regime of people’s democracy, C. Daicoviciu and E. Stănescu followed these lines in defining the framework of national historiography:

New studies and research have demonstrated that though we can talk about the beginning of national consciousness in the second half of the 18th century, the historical process of its formation had been a lengthy one dating centuries back. During Romanian Middle Ages, the Romanian people is characterized, as mentality and ideology, by a strong consciousness of kinship (*neam*) and linguistic unity, which holds a special role in the entire evolution of medieval culture, on the one hand, and in the direction of many of its internal and external struggles.²⁷

The Nation was written into the identitarian narrative of the communist regime by the historiographical effort of demonstrating ‘scientifically’ the Romanian people’s community of origin, language, feeling, and culture within the present country’s territory.

In the second half of the fifties and the first half of the sixties, historians predominantly focused on these elements of the national society, for they were perceived to be constant. Their historical existence was placed by ideology in the intermediary space between basis and superstructure. When they materialized into a state-building program, the front imposed the formula of national ideology. Even the latter would increasingly gain a necessary positive encoding especially if it could substantiate the present. Last but not least, the concept *neam* (kin) was introduced into the historical discourse about the Romanian people, signifying a more precise characterization of the main subject in national history. As one Romanian scholar

²⁷ C. Daicoviciu și Eugen Stănescu, „Probleme principale ale cercetării istoriei României în anii puterii populare”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, [1947-1962 Cercetarea Istoriei României în anii Puterii Populare] 6, an XV, 1962, p. xcviii.

remarked, the transition from *popor* (people) to *neam* (kinship) signaled in Romania's national discourse a transition to essentializing narratives about origins and "blood and soil". This brought the ethnic element into the Nation, which would signify "a community of the same blood with cultural-linguistic and political rights on a given territory. In other words, a Kulturnation inspired by the romantic *Volk*."²⁸ One can observe a similar transition under communism: using the 1848 and 1859 generation of Romanian intellectuals (who had been or were well on the way to be rehabilitated), historians gradually ethnicized a signifier, *poporul*, which initially had been basically a stopgap for collective identity caught in between "the working classes" and "the Romanians".

Overall, from 1955 onwards, the historical front took on the task of documenting and configuring the infrastructure of the Nation through the emphasis of its culture and physiognomy. Consequently, socialist patriotism in historical key signified the sense of identity of all those who identified with the cultural tradition and owned the consciousness of kin (*conștiința de neam*). By 1964, historians' most important accomplishment was that of building a master-narrative according to which the Motherland belonged to all Romanians, rather than to only one class.²⁹ The cultural revolution of the present was placed in direct continuity with a perceived cumulative national enlightenment in history. The inevitability of objectivity that lay at the core of historical materialism, accentuated by the context of re-professionalization upon

²⁸ Victor Neumann, "Neam și popor: noțiunile etnocentrismului românesc", Neumann și Heinen (eds.), *Istoria României...* p. 389. Also see Victor Neumann, *Neam, Popor sau Națiune? Despre identitățile politice europene*, ediția a II-a, (București: Curtea Veche Publishing, 2005).

²⁹ K Bochmann correctly pointed out that the enrichment of patriotism with a concept of people as „motherland (*patrie*) of all Romanians" was a consequence of the 1848 generation's struggle to create a Romanian nation-state. In other words, it was a form of discursive enfranchisement. As I already mentioned several of times, the increasing and extensive legitimation via the 1848 generation pursued by the RWP (as founders of the nation-state and the modern Romania nation), permitted to both historiographical and political discourse to simultaneously pursue the widening and particularization of who the people were. In other words, the Nation was well on its way to being defined. See Klaus Bochmann, "Conceptul de patriotism în cultura română", Neumann și Heinen (eds.), *Istoria României...* p.112.

the collapse of *rollerism*, offered the pretext of re-igniting a salvational *topos* in the realm of science and culture. This *topos* had dominated before 1945 the act of culture-building, and particularly that of history-writing. The entrenchment of the Nation in the demonstration and analysis of its cultural morphology generated a revival of a supra-personal unity of purpose within the epistemic community and in history-production.

The premise behind founding the communist new “story of identity” on the imperative of kin-cultural disambiguation and illumination was similar to Rădulescu-Motru’s principle that “without culture there is no history; culture grants coherence to a community in both time and space.”³⁰ Culture and progress could make sense only if they encompassed the entire people. The prerequisite for Romanians’ historical development was their cultural awakening (*ridicare*).³¹ In other words, the fundamental legitimation for the gradual writing back the Nation under communism in Romania was the historiographical prerequisite and demonstrability of the national community’s kin-cultural *palingenetic consensus*.³² National consciousness, unity and ultimately the nation-state would be situated as continuous ideals of the people *throughout* its history. This was the first stage of the fusion between national and socialist utopias.

Under the circumstances of RWP’s defensive emancipation, culture and history became matters of national dignity. Pride could only based on authenticity. Therefore, science at work for the people gained a new meaning:

³⁰ Balázs Trencsényi, „Conceptualizarea caracterului național în tradiția intelectuală românească”, Neumann și Heinen (eds.), *Istoria României*.... p. 352.

³¹ This was the dominant reading of the 1848 generation by post-1955 historiography in Romania. For example see David Prodan’s keynote address at the celebration of Transylvania forty-eighter Simion Bărnuțiu in „150 de ani de la nașterea lui Gheorghe Barițiu,” *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 4, an XV, 1962, pp. 1005-1007 or V. Curticăpeanu’s general reading of the forty-eighters’ program of national cultural premise as a premise for national political unity in „Întemeierea societății ASTRA și rolul ei în cultura poporului român (1861)”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 6, an XIV, 1961, pp. 1139-1463. This revivalist interpretative key would be obviously extended to other personalities and/or events, which led to an ever expansion of the pool of progressive national heritage.

³² Roger Griffin, “The Palingenetic Political Community: Rethinking the Legitimation of Totalitarian Regimes in Inter- War Europe,” *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions*, 3:3 (2002), p. 32.

the successes of science and culture will only increase the patriotic feelings of the men and women of science and culture. They will thus become reliable pillars of our state's independent and free existence [...] The scientist will [subsequently] be judged not only on the basis of the positive accomplishments he achieved for science. S/he will first and foremost evaluate according to his/her performance for the material and cultural betterment of the people.³³

The writing of national history would be subsequently transformed into the realization of a calling of communal rebirth. Or, as V Maciu quoted a personality newly recuperated from the pre-communist communist past: national history was one of the *pia desideria* of science and the nation.³⁴ It only helped when, by 1959, the party would internalize a similar urgency for an ever expanding writing the nation back in: “we are missing extensive studies and monographs about national economy, the formation and the Romanian people and language, about contemporary history, and monographs about the theory of the state and of national law.”³⁵ If compared to similar calls for monographic works from 1955, it becomes evident that as the facets of national development gradually became more specific, the scopes of history-production grew wider.

B. The Science of History: Vocation and Tradition

In 1955, in the aftermath of the Second RWP Congress, in a speech I often discussed, T. Săvulescu defined the position and role of scientists in the communist regime. According to him,

the academic garb donned on RPR scientists ordains them with exceptional responsibilities and compels those around them to expedient reckoning so that such garb would not fall to disrepute. In order to increase even more the role of men of science and of culture in elevating our people, it is required that he be left to his difficult and demanding tasks. He cannot be replaced in his work without endangering progress itself.³⁶

³³ Traian Săvulescu, “Știința în slujba poporului...”, f. 35 and f. 72.

³⁴ Maciu quoted Bogdan P. Hașdeu's statement in 1860. A phenomenon that I will analyze in depth in the following subsection will be the appeal of the traditions of pre-communist political, cultural, and historical thought in order to legitimize and rationalize the positions adopted by the historical profession in the communist present. See V Maciu, „Activitatea istoriografică a lui B P Hașdeu”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 5, an XVI, 1963, pp. 1023.

³⁵ “Referat privind unele probleme ale activității de cercetare științifică din RPR”, 7 aprilie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, 12/1959, f. 150.

³⁶ Traian Săvulescu, “Știința în slujba poporului...”, f. 72.

Săvulescu's remarks signaled that the accomplishment of developmental tasks would now depend more on the activity of specialists in their respective fields of science (its generic sense), rather than on the intervention of *praktiki*, individuals ordained by the Party with holding the ideological ciphers for the scholarly domains they intervened into. As already detailed in chapters two and three, upon the demise of *rollerism*, the historical front provided similar statements and realignments. The turn toward a more traditional understanding of 'science', which was not anymore unilaterally understood as Marxist-Leninist, was the expression of what Sochor called "the acceptance of the cultural limits of revolution". In her analysis of Lenin's conceptualization of cultural revolution, she pointed to an "adaptation to cultural conservatism...a political approach that would bind people to the new regime." According to Lenin, the political revolution "must be assimilated; we must help the masses of the people to understand it."³⁷

In Romania, this systemic adjustment had several consequences: re-professionalization, the fresh emphasis on tradition; autonomy of epistemic dynamics, and, ultimately, a change within the relationship between historians and the party based on common interests and themes on the realm of indentitarian proliferation. These new realities were apparent in the invocation of tradition for the purpose of better defining the role of history-production in an emancipating political regime. Moreover, the 19th century historical-political thought was called upon to legitimize contemporary problematizations generated by the turn toward regime individuality and cultural revival:

It is beyond doubt that state politics can and must employ history in establishing (*așezarea*) domestic institutions and foreign relations; but politics conspiring for the falsification of

³⁷ Sochor, *Revolution...*, p. 228

historical truth is similar to trying to make planet Mars disappear from space. (Bogdan P. Haşdeu)³⁸

and

Only though history can we understand the great problems that put humanity in motion nowadays. Each of us is called for contributing to their resolution. If we know the ways of the past, we can see where progress is taking us into the future. How can one understand the great movement of nationalities without its thorough historical study? (A. D. Xenopol)³⁹

Despite the re-affirmation of continuity in history-production's mission and scope, an important element should not be overlooked. This phenomenon was not only an epistemic community's recourse to "exemplary past achievements" (Kuhn)⁴⁰, but it was also the result of a self-corrective mechanism of "Stalinist science" (Krementsov). In his 1951 article "Remarks on Economic Questions", Stalin stated that "if you can transform and abolish a law of science, this means that we are good for nothing. Laws must be considered, controlled, and used. The sphere in which they apply can be limited. [...] This is so in relation to all science." In other words, the Soviet leader admitted that science, by itself, was "objective" and that its laws "could not be created, destroyed, or transformed by human will."⁴¹ The relevance of science consisted in the array of applications it could have within a specific national context, for its development was determined solely by the social conditions in a country. In other words, the role science was re-defined in reference to national interest while its scope could gain autonomy if such interest was to be met with. Indeed, Pollock pertinently concluded that Stalin's exhortations on objective knowledge represented "the tentative and awkward first steps toward accepting science as a

³⁸ Sacerdoţeanu, „Concepţia istorică...”, p. 156.

³⁹ Lucian Boia, *Evoluţia Istoriografiei Române. Partea I.*, p. 158.

⁴⁰ Thomas Kuhn argued that in the realignment of "the constellation beliefs, values, techniques, and so on shared by the members of a given community," exemplary past achievements represent "concrete puzzle-solutions which, employed as models or examples, can replace explicit rules as a basis for the solution of the remaining puzzles of normal science." See Kuhn, *The Structure...*, p. 175.

⁴¹ Pollock, *Stalin...*, pp. 201-205.

subject beyond the Party's ideological reach." By 1961, the CPSU Party Program declared that "the Party will do everything to enhance the role of science in building communist society."⁴²

Under the circumstances, the changing role of history-production after 1955 in Romania should be understood in terms similar to Heer's characterization of the situation at the Moscow center: "incremental shifts of emphasis, method, and approach which have tended to modify, augment, and dramatize – rather than overturn – the functions of historiography in the Soviet system."⁴³ The syncretic recourse to tradition and the return of the Nation in the form of cultural revival and historiographical disambiguation of kinship did not amount to a discontinuity from the dynamics of the historical front's early years. The epistemic field, though more complex, was still the product of a mixture of epistemic emancipation, consecration, and ideological instrumentalization.

During the March 1963 general session of the RPR Academy, one of its vice-presidents, Ștefan Milcu, presented an extensive report on the scientific accomplishments in the country. After mentioning that in the field of "historical sciences" 152 themes were finalized out of 167 set up by the research plan (only 6 were not completed), he pointed out that "there is much to be done regarding the reconsideration of and capitalization on our historical progressive thought from the past. The same applies to promptly and rigorously rebuking any distortion or falsification of the history of our motherland."⁴⁴ Until 1955, there have been limited, though increasingly numerous, re-assessments of pre-communist historians and their writings. But it was for the first time when an official situated such rehabilitation on the same side with the imperative of nationally defensive and anti-"revisionist" historiography. The same year, during

⁴² *Idem*, pp. 218-222.

⁴³ Heer, *Politics and History*..., p. 13.

⁴⁴ „Sesiunea generală a Academiei R.P.R. (18-21 martie 1963)”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 2, an XVI, 1963, p. 452.

the anniversary of the fifteen years of the RPR Academy's existence, its president Ilie Murgulescu ended his address declaring that

in fulfilling enthusiastically our research, we, the Academy's scientists, from the grey-haired scholars of the laboratories and libraries, to the youngsters recently arrived on the plots (*ogorul*) of science, must follow unflinchingly the path that the party and its leader – comrade Gheorghiu Gheorghiu-Dej - have guided us on in order to continue the glorious feats accomplished by our forerunners, to work for the progress and happiness of our people.”⁴⁵

All science, past and present, was called upon for accelerating the Romanians' journey to “prosperity, culture, and happiness.”

The official sanctioning of the appeal to tradition for the fulfillment of the Romanian people's journey into the realm of socialist utopia would be reflected immediately in *Studii*. The fifth issue of the journal carried articles on two important historians who represented two generations of the profession: Bogdan P. Hașdeu and Dimitrie Onciul.⁴⁶ If the first was no stranger to either *Studii* or the publishing houses⁴⁷, the second was an exceptional addition to the roster of topics approached by the journal.⁴⁸ As early as 1957, P. Țugui reported that “nothing has been written up now about the prestigious historian D. Onciul. The very few attempts that have been made to reconsider the contributions of historians such as N Iorga, A. D. Xenopol, V Pârvan in Romanian historiography have erred by vulgarization, for the constructive, valuable part of their work has been ignored.”⁴⁹ A year later, A. Oțetea reported at a meeting in 1958, just before he was demoted from the position of *Studii*'s editor-in-chief, that the journal, “at the

⁴⁵ “Ședința festivă cu prilejul aniversării a 15 ani de existență a Academiei R.P.R.”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 5, an XVI, 1963, p. 1152.

⁴⁶ V Maciu, „Activitatea istoriografică...”, *Ibidem.* and Șt. Ștefănescu, „Concepția și metoda istorică a lui Dimitrie Onciul (1856-1923)”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 6, an XVI, 1963, pp. 1237-1251.

⁴⁷ I already discussed in chapter two A. Sacerdoțeanu's article on Hașdeu from *Studii*'s issue no. 5 in 1957. A first edition of Hașdeu's work had appeared in 1953 at the Publishing House for Literature and Art. A new section will appear in 1959, with successive editions in the following years.

⁴⁸ A. Sacerdoțeanu, one of Iorga's assistants, coordinated, under communism, the first edition, in two volumes, of D. Onciul's *Selected Writings* in 1968 at the Scientific Publishing House. This edition was an extensive version of an initial one that Sacerdoțeanu published in 1946.

⁴⁹ P. Țugui, „Informație privind probleme ale activității științifice pe tărâmul istoriei”, *Ibidem*, f. 4.

party's urge, began the reconsideration of our historians. We have written about Xenopol and Pârvan. We will continue this year with pieces about Onciul, Iorga and about I. Bogdan.”⁵⁰ The plan fell through though, as the editorial board was replaced by the third issue of 1958.⁵¹ Some of the historians mentioned will appear repeatedly in some of the articles or references from 1958 until 1962, sometimes as strawmen other times as landmarks in the study of certain topics. Some will also be fully celebrated, as in the case of N Iorga in 1960, when the RPR Academy organized a commemorative session for marking twenty years since his assassination by members of the Iron Guard. It was the first step in the full rehabilitation of Iorga as paramount figure of Romanian historiography.⁵²

What stands out in the case of the articles about Hașdeu and Onciul is not only the positive evaluation of their work, but the fact that, in contrast to previous articles written about pre-communist historians, the authors were now representatives of the new generations within the historical front: Vasile Maciu and Ștefan Ștefănescu. This was a significant contrast from people such as Sacerdoțeanu or Vulpe, whose first academic socialization took place before 1945. Maciu and Ștefănescu, success stories of the cultural revolution on the historical front, indicated now the founding fathers of their ‘science’. According to the first, Hașdeu stood out for his “remarkable attempts to give history a scientific character, to found it on laws.” It was only fitting then to consider him one of the “trailblazers of Romanian historiography.”⁵³ The second

⁵⁰ „Stenograma ședinței cu redactorii responsabili ai revistelor de științe sociale...”, *Ibidem*, f. 2.

⁵¹ „Informație despre activitatea editorială și planul de apariții pe anul 1958”, 5 mai, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.1/1958, ff. 235-244.

⁵² A Oțetea presented a paper about Iorga's position during the 1907 peasant uprising during the latter's event 50th anniversary at the RPR Academy. Oțetea's positive approach was confronted with an immediate backlash from both the DPC and his fellow academicians, among them even the institution's president, Traian Săvulescu. This initiative was one of the accusation points against Oțetea during the May 1958 meeting between DPC's head, Leonte Răutu, and party representatives of the cultural front. See „Semicentenarul răscoalei țăranilor din 1907”, 10 mai, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.6/1957, ff. 180-181.

⁵³ Maciu, *Ibidem*, p. 1031.

author went even further, bringing back a lingo indicative for a profession that was rekindling its missionary calling. Ștefănescu considered that A. D. Xenopol, I. Bogdan, D. Onciul, and N. Iorga formed no less than the “synod (*sobor*) of historical research”: “equipped (*înarmați*) with a rigorous research method, never wondering off the path of certain historical facts, fighting against romantic tendencies, against dilettantism and useless chatter, they founded the critical school of our historiography.”⁵⁴ This article was also relevant, because it did not stop at these names. Other historians, who had been mentored by Onciul and Iorga, were included in the profession’s pantheon: V. Pârvan, Constantin Giurescu, I. Minea. In other words, two generations of historians were rehabilitated. The third, the “New School”, was already well on the path to recognition within the historical front: C. C. Giurescu and P. P. Panaitescu (with one important exception, Gh. I. Brătianu, who had died in Sighet prison and who would be officially rehabilitated only in 1980).

Ștefănescu’s reconsideration of Onciul fitted perfectly the blueprint indicated by Milcu at the March 1963 session of the Academy:

D. Onciul imposed himself as historian at a time when historiography heatedly debated the topic of ‘the Romanians’ continuity’ on the left bank of the Danube. The attack against our people engineered by Eder and Engel, to which Șincai, Micu, and Petru Maior replied, will be followed in the last third of the 19th century by that of Roesler and Hunfalvy. [...] In order to defeat the arguments of historians with thorough qualification, formed in the strict discipline of the Austrian school, it was required that a specialist came, one who mastered his foes’ weapons. D. Onciul proved to be the one, for he was educated in the same school’s discipline. He sought to apply to historical research the exactness usually found in hard sciences, an imperious logic, unheard of before him in Romanian historiography. He knew how to reply to critical analysis with critical analysis based on the totality of historical sources. Born in a region with rich traces of a glorious past, D. Onciul transformed the study of history into a means of defending Romanians’ political rights.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Ștefănescu, *Ibidem*, p. 1237.

⁵⁵ *Idem*, p.1244. Ștefănescu was referring at the Romanian historiography’s reaction against those historians who advocated the ‘immigrationist theory’ which held that the Roman retreat from Dacia ended the continuity of the indigenous population which the Romanians held to have been the basis for the ethnogenesis of the Romanian people. The first reaction on the Romanian side was formulated by the representatives of the Transylvania School. They contended that Romanians were of pure Latin origin. This trend was dominant in domestic historiography until the last decades of the 19th century. First Hașdeu, then Xenopol, followed by the critical school brought back the Dacian element in the formation of the Romanian people. With Pârvan, the thesis of the Dacian-Roman

Onciul was recuperated for the cause of demonstrating the continuity of Romanians on the contemporary territory of Romania. Ștefănescu also presented what he considered Onciul's exemplary research on the formation of the Romanian feudal states and his expositions on the prestigious role held in international and regional politics by Romanian voievods.

But most importantly, with his analysis of Onciul, Ștefănescu brought back into the general discourse of history-production under communism the concept of "historical tradition". The latter has been a formula in Romanian historiography that indicated a body of knowledge pre-existent to scientific research, which was formed on the basis of existing chronicles about Romanians. For example, in the case of Ștefănescu's, two crucial "historical traditions" were invoked: that of the origins of Romanians and that of formation of the Romanian medieval kingdoms. Most importantly, in an indication of the entrenchment of continuity on the historical front, Ștefănescu, using Onciul as proxy, squarely stated that "because these facts have been validated by contemporary historical findings, 'science cannot leave the real field of historical tradition'".⁵⁶ The remark was only announcing a reality already in place in post-1956 history-production under communism. By gradually adopting the thematic constants and obsessions of pre-1945 historiography, the front basically "reproduced numerous traditional problems of history writing in Romania."⁵⁷

In his turn, V Maciu presented Hașdeu both from the point of view of the field's genealogy and as initiator of the scientific clarification of matters related to the origin of the

ethnogenesis of Romanians basically became axiomatic. A secondary, though important tendency developed, especially in late 1930s and in the last fifteen years of the communist regime. It overemphasized the Dacian and Thracian origin of Romanians. This interpretation went hand in hand with theories of exceptionalism and complete autochthonism of a "Romanian civilization".

⁵⁶ *Idem*, p. 1242

⁵⁷ Iordachi and Trencsényi, "In Search of...", 450.

Romanian people. Maciu perceived Hașdeu as one of those who “prepared the path to a Romanian history through which one could envisage the changing framework of our national life in harmony with the life of humanity.”⁵⁸ Hașdeu was a forefather of the new school of history-writing because of his reliance on careful publication and study of archival documents, and because his erudition in approaching topics crucial to national historiography. Just as Ștefănescu presented *Onciul*, for Maciu, Hașdeu was a crucial landmark because of his tackling with questions such as

the Dacians and Dacian-Roman continuity in Dacia, the formation of the Romanian people and of the first Romanian states in the Middle Ages, the origin of the Basarabs [allegedly the founding dynasty in Wallachia, n.a.], ethnic stratification in the Balkans, the role cumans in Romanian people’s history ... the economy history of Romanians before the creation of Wallachia (*Țara Românească*) and Moldova, he fought against Rosler’s theory, he analyzed the old Romanian institutions, he presented remarkable historical personalities.⁵⁹

The reappraisals of both Hașdeu and *Onciul* were first and foremost acts of legitimating approaches and agendas of history-production about the Nation. By 1963, the first of the two volumes of *Tratat de istorie a României* had been published with the third and forth on the way. At the Academy’s March session that year, Oțetea concluded that the work and completion of the treaty gave historians “the opportunity to find out exactly what we are missing and, consequently, which problems are still to be solved. In this way, we can draft more thorough, more realistic, research plans. At the same time, we can also proceed with critically capitalizing on the legacy that our forefathers left to us.”⁶⁰ Oțetea basically reaffirmed the program that he promoted in 1957 and 1958: first, the agenda of history-production was one centered on the

⁵⁸ Maciu, *Ibidem*, p. 1026. The quote was a excerpt from the statement of purpose of Hașdeu’s *Foița de istorie și literatură*, a journal that promoted pioneering historiography on national history.

⁵⁹ *Idem*, p. 1031.

⁶⁰ „Sesiunea generală a Academiei R.P.R. (18-21 martie 1963)”, *Ibidem*, pp. 452-453.

national past. Second, the most important issues were those signaled by the forerunners of the historical front, for they had tried to defend national interest by means of scientific effort.

The last statements though should not be read along the lines of an abrogation of a national program on the historical front from mid-1958 to 1962. As already discussed, during those years, there was indeed a spike in the RWP's campaign against contamination from "bourgeois nationalism" and/or "revisionism". In this context, the re-assessment of tradition had been slowed down to a certain extent. For example, at the infamous meeting between DPC representatives and prominent members of the cultural front, on May 30-31, 1958, Dumitru Popescu (then vice-president of the State Committee for Culture) remarked:

We must not exaggerate and call classic or semi-classic everything that has been published more than twenty years ago. This is not the criterion for masterliness. We also believe, though I am not sure that all men of culture present here do, that if one bows too much before the past of our culture ... [one will forget that] we have to believe that, because of historical and social reasons, the most important flourishing and development of our people's historical philosophy of culture only lies before us.⁶¹

This reaction was the result of both international developments (the Hungarian revolution and the 1957 Moscow Declaration) and domestic realities. As it has appeared many a times in party documents that I have quoted, the RWP was fully engaged in cultural revolution, which meant both transformation and re-assessment of the past. Therefore, historiographical heritage was perceived as both ideological burden and scientific inspiration. The principle of *partiinost* was the fundamental sorting device in the process of searching for a usable past. However, the latter itself was dependent on imperatives of planned science consolidation and on the gradual crystallization of the communist regime individuality in Romania. Between 1958 and 1961, the

⁶¹ "Stenograma Consfăturii din zilele 30-31 mai 1958", *Ibidem*, f. 78. A few pages later, Popescu's statements are confirmed by P. Cornea, then director of the general section on publishing houses of the minister of education, who declared that "the 1956 plan of re-considering writers from the interwar period had already gained a higher importance than necessary, and by 1957 the situation was extremely serious because the proportion was by now reversed." *Idem*, f. 131.

RWP pursued both, thus allowing for a pervasive ambivalent presence of tradition on the historical front simultaneously with maintaining prophylactic practices. The latter functioned as levers in order to prevent overshooting in relation to what had to be reconsidered.

From 1958 until 1962, the background of the historical front evolution was still an ideology of life-and-death class struggle, what Eric van Ree coined Stalin's "Marxist Darwinism". But the old and the new, "the growing and the dying," to paraphrase Stalin,⁶² would gradually gain added value in the Romanian context on the realm of history-writing. The old would resonate the new on two levels: first, that of purpose, for historiography had been predominantly formulated in defensive terms, that is, as advocacy of the national cause. Second, the transformation of history as a discipline had been punctuated by dialectics of revolutionary change followed by evolutionary return to tradition.

For example, in relation to the first level, in 1911, N. Iorga declared that "the historian has the duty of tirelessly reminding about the national tradition. He is a spokesman for the unity of kinship (*neamului*) beyond political and class boundaries, a preacher of race [in the sense of ethnic, n.a.] solidarity and a discoverer of ideals."⁶³ Or, to take a representative of the pre-war Cluj school of historiography, I Lupaș, according to him "the duty of writers, be they historians, literati, journalists, is for them to be apostles of the national idea, one that could be said to be the leitmotif of their entire work."⁶⁴ Or, to choose among the representatives of the "New School", C. C. Giurescu considered that the purpose of history was to confirm the "sentiment of national pride and absolute fate in the future of our people and our state."⁶⁵ Moreover, at the foundation

⁶² Van Ree, *Stalin as a Marxist ...*, p. 271.

⁶³ „Două concepții istorice”, Cuvântare de intrare în Academia Română (17 mai 1911) in Nicolae Iorga, *Generalități cu privire la studiile istorice*, ed. III-a (București: Monitorul Oficial și Imprimeriile Statului, 1944), p. 98.

⁶⁴ Zub, *Istorie și istorici...*, p. 97.

⁶⁵ Boia, *History and Myth...*, p. 70.

of history as a discipline lay Romantic historiography, to whose representatives both historians and party leaders often referred at the end of the 1950s and beginning of the 1960s. Monika Barr emphasized that this group imposed the principle that “history was written not only about the people, but also for the people.”⁶⁶ Therefore history was in itself national education - the very premise of the national vocation of the historical profession as it would be formulated by later generations.

To turn to the second level, indeed the evolution of history-writing, from the mid-19th century until 1945, was punctuated by declarative and institutional emancipations of one generation from its elders. M. Kogălniceanu, the most important historian of the Romantic generation, perceived history-writing as a form of social, political, and cultural enfranchisement. He along with others (e.g., N. Bălcescu or S. Bărnăușu) thus brought about a sort of popular revolution within the craft by democratizing its audience, medium, and content.⁶⁷ The critical school (Bogdan, Onciul, Iorga) rejected the very legitimacy of their predecessors. They considered that “history as a science was on the eve [late 19th century] of a fundamental renewal.” Iorga in particular believed that “the whole Romanian culture and society needed such makeover. In this sense, he will later describe the critical school as a revolution.”⁶⁸ One of his most important students, V. Pârvan, after the First World War, in his inaugural lectures at “Dacia Superioara” University in Cluj, stressed that the postwar generation was not allowed “opportunism, haggling, or shortsightedness. We are the harsh priests of a religion of purification. We are the prophets of a time that is yet too far for the hasty appetites of our greedy contemporaries. [...] The responsibility of the entire life of our nation lies on our shoulders. The

⁶⁶ Barr, *Historians...*, p. 50.

⁶⁷ *Idem*, p. 15.

⁶⁸ Zub, *De la istorie critic...*, p. 104.

health of its soul has been entrusted to us.”⁶⁹ And, last but not least, C. C. Giurescu, in the forward of the “New School” journal, *Revista istorică română*, announced that „the focus of the prewar generation of historians was the ideal of the entire Romanian society that is national unification. Today’s generation has experienced the accomplishment of this goal. It now faced with problems that have new relevance: economic, social, and cultural issues. That is why, in continuing previous research interests, we will grant greater attention to these matters that are rooted in our past. Knowing their history, we will contribute to their resolution.”⁷⁰ Though this statement sounded rather benign, the “New School” did attempt to take over the scientific field of history. The conflict between C.C. Giurescu and P. P. Panaitescu, on the one side, and N. Iorga, on the other, was deeply personal.⁷¹ At the same time, members of the “New School” did anything in their power to carve an institutional base for their program⁷² (e.g., Giurescu’s Institute of National History or Panaitescu’s ascension during the Iron Guard dictatorship). Moreover, this group would also coalesce for a while around Gh.I. Brătianu’s party. The latter was perceived as the platform for “all who had never participated before in politics, disgusted by the latter murky nature, all those who wished for a change for the better of political life.”⁷³ In other words, a symptom of the historical profession in Romania was not merely that its

⁶⁹ „Idei și forme istorice. Patru lecții inaugurale” in Vasile Pârvan, *Scrieri*, text stabilit, studiu introductiv și note de Alexandru Zub (București: Editura Științifică, 1981), p. 380.

⁷⁰ Zub, *Istorie și istorici...*, p. 173.

⁷¹ For details about the deep personal conflicts between Iorga, Giurescu, Panaitescu, P. Russo see Nicholas M. Nagy-Talavera, *Nicolae Iorga. A Biography* (Iași: The Romanian Cultural Foundation, 1996), pp. 320-330 and Lucian Năstasă, *Generație și schimbare în istoriografia românească (Sfârșitul secolului XIX și începutul secolului XX)* (Cluja: Presa universitată, 1999).

⁷² Lucian Năstasă. *Intellectualii și promovarea socială. Pentru o morfologie a câmpului universitar* (Cluj: Nereamia Napocae, 2003).

⁷³ C. C. Giurescu, *Amintiri* (București: Editura Sport-Turism, 1976), p. 253-254. Also see Valeriu Râpeanu, „Gheorghe I Brătianu. Studiu introductiv” in Gheorghe I Brătianu, *Tradiția istorică despre întemeierea statelor românești*, ediție îngrijită, studiu introductiv și note de Valeriu Râpeanu (București: Editura Eminescu, 1980). A further example of the radicalism of the historians associated with the New School is the fact that several of them were sympathizers or associated with the Iron Guard: besides Panaitescu, Radu Vulpe, Vladimir Dumitrescu, Vasile Cristescu, or Scarlat Lambrino. Giurescu himself was regional minister during Carol II’s dictatorship.

representatives did not make a difference in principle between history-production and cultural and socio-political projects. They also associated historiographical revisionism with radical systemic change.

If the RWP's cultural revolution did not bring much support on the part of pre-communist historians in its internationalist phase, the situation changed once it became associated to principles of cultural revival and regime emancipation. State support for scientific endeavor, official sanction of status combined with images of national palingenesis touched familiar strings in the collective ethos of this epistemic community. At the same time, the downfall of *rollerism* combined with widening validation of ethno-cultural historiography did create a sense of purpose and pride for sections of the profession that either were socialized or emulated the pre-communist period. It is no surprise that one of the meteoric figures of Marxist-Leninist historiography, Solomon Știrbu would complain in 1957 that "there is a nihilist attitude toward everything that has been written after 1944."⁷⁴ Moreover, as one contemporary historian remarked after studying a considerable number of Securitate files of historical front members, those who interacted with the secret police many a times succeeded in "enhancing and transferring to their supervisors the interest for History. This allowed for the sublimation and nourishment of national priorities amongst Securitate officers, particularly on matters such as ethnogenesis and the continuity of Romanians."⁷⁵ In other words, the national proliferation of the communist regime generated acculturation not only within the epistemic community but also in

⁷⁴ „Ședinta din 13 mai 1957”, *Ibidem*, f. 47.

⁷⁵ Opris, *ibidem*, vol. II, p. 11-12. The classical case offered by Opris is that of the party and Securitate reaction against Emil Petrovici's theory that the Romanian people had been nomadic. The informer "Tudor" provides the following evaluation of Petrovici's statements in 1960 durring a debate at the Academy about the formation of the Romanian language and people: "his statement can become a strong weapon in the hand of bourgeois Roeslerian historians, a attitude with dangerous political consequences for our country." "Tudor" recommended the organs of control to insure that Petrovici will not publish his views on the topic. (pp. 584-585) Similarly, in 1958, the Academy did not publish the proceedings of the Commission for analysis of the formation of the Romanian language and people because of Petrovici's unorthodox views.

the midst of the organs of control. And, why not, as seen in the case of Dej, in the previous chapter, and in the obvious case of Ceaușescu, the same phenomenon found fertile ground at the highest levels of party leadership.

The interplay between regime interests, epistemic vocation, and the weight of tradition created a two-way street of communication between the historians and the party. In his preface to Silviu Dragomir's monograph about Avram Iancu, Transylvanian leader of the 1848 revolution, V Maciu excellently summarized the *modus vivendi* reached on the historical front by the beginning of the 1960: "the cultural revolution initiated by the communist party at the beginning of 1948 engaged and captivated this researcher of the Romanians' movement of liberation in Transylvania too. Despite his advanced age, but with a sharp mind, Silviu Dragomir succeeded in internalizing to a large extent the materialist understanding of history and in employing it in order to give a scientific foundation to his historical writing."⁷⁶ Or, a better formulation: historians with something to write about national priorities within the historical front found a place under the sun upon accepting the party's world-view.

For example, in 1957, Dragomir was recruited by the party, along with Ioan Lupaș and Ștefan Meteș (helped by two younger historians Ștefan Lupsa and Pompiliu Teodor under the supervision of C. Daicoviciu), to pursue research about the union between Transylvanian Romanians and the Catholic Church in 1698. Despite the fact that this task force did not produce a monograph on the topic, over 500 pages of documents were translated from those brought in from Hungary. They will be later used for the IIIrd volume of the treatise of national history and in the project *History of Transylvania*. The common ground between these historians and the

⁷⁶ *Apud*, Șipoș, *Silviu Dragomir...*, p. 21 (footnote 4).

party was the interest in showing the Union as an abusive act against Romanians.⁷⁷ If during the interwar period Dragomir, Meteș, and Lupaș wrote against the Union on the basis of their Orthodox bias, now they attacked it from the point of view of the Romanians' struggle for national, social, and political liberation. Both and party and these historians ultimately pursued the same goal: "establishing the truth about this period of Ardeal's history."⁷⁸

Another exemplary case of a central figure of the pre-communist historical profession that would fully adjust to the priorities of the front is C. C. Giurescu. I already presented in an earlier chapter some biographical information on his rehabilitation under communism. Between 1957 and 1963, Giurescu had two articles published in *Studii* and a contribution in the anniversary volume *Studii privind Unirea Principatelor* on the Bucharest election of Alexandru Ioan Cuza. More importantly, however, is the fact that in 1963, he will be reintegrated at the History Department of the Bucharest University. The two historians who submitted evaluations for his re-admittance among the professorial body were Traian Lungu and Dan Berindei, both of whom were party members with long-standing credentials within the historical front. One used to be among Roller's protégées, while the second held a hybrid position. Giurescu used to be Berindei's professor until 1945. Berindei was also close to Constantinescu-Iași, a historian-censor, helping the latter with his work; he showed increased openness toward a syncretic line in historiography; and, he was married with the daughter of a has-been (*fost*), Ion Hudiță, who had been sent to Sighet in the same group with C. C. Giurescu. Udrea provided the following characterization of Giurescu: "despite his great efforts, I am not certain that they are based on

⁷⁷ *Idem*, p. 81 and pp. 263-267

⁷⁸ The same party document contended that I. Lupaș possessed documents that proved that the Union had not been real, that its official papers were falsified. Lupaș though refused to make these sources public. The party was to take the appropriate decisions in order to obtain and publish the documents. V. Vaida, "Informare", 28 august 1958, Arh. St. Cluj, Comitetul Regional PCR Cluj, fond 13, dos. 2/1958, f. 74-78 in Năstasă. *Intelectualii..*, p. 323.

conviction or opportunism. I therefore believe that comrade Giurescu did not succeed in understanding much of the transformations that took place in our country since August 23, 1944.” In his turn, Berindei declared that

as professor, C. C. Giurescu was rigorous, thorough, serious, and punctual. Considering that he was a bourgeois historian, his classes were based on idealist principles, but he also was one of the historians who paid a great deal of attention to the economic and social factor. [...] He did master the Marxist-Leninist teaching. Of course, his former activity and political position can still be noticed in his way of thinking but, at the same time, it is clear that between Giurescu in 1944 and Giurescu in 1963 there is a significant difference. There have been important changes in the way he currently perceives the world and our society.⁷⁹

The characterizations of the two historians who were products of the communist historical front have one element in common. Both remarked that C. C. Giurescu was making a great deal of effort to adapt and succeed under the new regime. The same can be deduced from Maciu’s description of Dragomir; a similar conclusion appeared in the profile of Zane from his Securitate file. Excluding names already mentioned in the previous chapters, two other such examples are significant: N. Bănescu – former rector of „Dacia Superioară” University in Cluj, will be integrated to the degree that he will receive in 1964 the title of “scientist emeritus” (*om de știință emerit*); Vladimir Dumitrescu – who by 1956 already had two state prizes and was head of section at the Archeology Institute.

It is obvious by now that a significant section of the historical front was made up, by the beginning of the 1960s, from historians fully educated and validated academically in the pre-communist period. They would at one point or another adjust to the regime playing various roles at different times. They were living embodiments and carriers of epistemic tradition into the historical front. They functioned as both agents and subjects of syncretism. C. C. Giurescu is again a case in point: the introduction of the second volume of the treatise criticized his interwar

⁷⁹ Ovidiu Bozgan, „Turbulențele unei cariere uiversitare în secolul XX”, in *Centenar Constantin C. Giurescu. Amintiri și documente inedite* (Craiova: Editura Universitaria, 2001), pp. 89-90.

approach on the state as “the perfect means available to humanity for insuring a people’ free development”.⁸⁰ By 1968, he would be the first Romanian historian since 1945 to tour as guest lecturer US universities.⁸¹ Moreover, his belief that the “essential characteristic of Romanian history is the ceaseless struggle of the Romanian people for survival and for the maintaining of the state”⁸² will become *the* central theme of N. Ceaușescu’s historical discourse. Last but not least, C. C. Giurescu’s rehabilitation stands out because it was sanctioned by public gesture: during his first day among the History Department’s faculty, he stood up and read a thank you letter addressed to none other than Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, the RWP’s leader.⁸³

To conclude, in order to characterize this phenomenon I would bring back a label I mentioned in previous chapter, that of *smenovekhovtsy*. Historians like Giurescu, Zane, Dragomir, and others, beside simple tactics of scholarly survival and/or opportunism, seem to have reached the conclusion that under circumstances of a durable communist regime, the latter would continue to defend and advance the interests of the Nation. Their opinion was helped by the RWP’s accentuated tendency of presenting itself as heir of the national tradition and defender

⁸⁰ „Prefață” in Andrei Oțetea et al., *Istoria României. Volum II. Feudalismul târziu. Feudalismul dezvoltat, în condițiile fărâmițării feudale și ale luptei pentru centralizarea statului. Feudalismul dezvoltat, în condițiile instaurării dominației otomane (a doua jumătate a secolului al XVI-lea)* (București: Editura Academiei RPR 1961), p. viii.

⁸¹ To get a better sense of proportion about the significance of choosing Giurescu for this tour of lectures in the US on the history of Romania, one should keep in mind that the first Soviet scholar to give a lecture course on the history of the USSR at an American university (Cornell University) was Isaac Mints in 1964. In contrast to Giurescu, Mints had impeccable Marxist-Leninist credentials being a veteran of the Civil War, a former protégées of Pokrovsky, the coordinator of the massive historiographical project *History of the Civil War*, one of Stalin’s most important historians until the end of 1940s, and by 1960s one of the central figures in the de-Stalinization of history-production in the Soviet Union. See Mackinnon, “Writing History for Stalin...”, *Ibidem*, p. 40. It seems that for the RCP (after 1965), Giurescu had impeccable nationalist credentials, besides his obvious scholarly qualification. Also see Constantin C. Giurescu, *Jurnal de călătorie* (București: Editura Sport-Turism, 1977), ediția a II-a.

⁸² Paul E. Michaelson, „Memories of Constantin C. Giurescu, 1968-1977” in *Centenar...*, p.199. Giurescu prepared three topics for his official lectures during the 1968 trip across the US: Transylvania and the history of the Romanian people; the formation of the Romanian nation-state; the life and deeds of Vlad Țepeș or Dracules (p. 195).

⁸³ Ioan Scurtu, „Amintiri despre profesorul Constantin C. Giurescu”, *Centenar...*, p. 263.

of the Romanian territory and interests against foreign intervention (read, the Soviet Union).⁸⁴ As a consequence, they chose to acculturate in the new environment, thus many of them regained their professional fame, while also giving a considerable boost to the national historical narrative under communism that implicitly generated systemic reproduction.

The problem of tradition and continuity within the historical front will be approached in the prefaces to the four volumes of the *Tratat de istorie a României* in reference to the existing debates on these issues from 1958 until 1963. Moreover, one can notice a tendency of some of the volume coordinators to distance themselves from authors, now re-integrated under the communist regime, because of their quarrels during the pre-communist period. The preface to the first volume, most likely written by C. Daicoviciu, its coordinator, provided an extensive list of historians who contributed to the modern study of prehistory, ancient history, and of early medieval history of Romania's territory. Among them, A. D. Xenopol, N. Iorga, and V. Pârvan, were signaled out because of their international face. According to the author, this group was important, because of

the incontestable merit of having elaborated a series of studies and ample monographs regarding particularly our political life and cultural history. They also wrote about an array of socio-economic topics related to the history of the motherland. [...] During this period [second half of 19th century, the beginning of the 20th, n.a.], works of synthesis were written in which Romania's history was situated in close connection with that of neighboring countries. [...] It must be emphasized however that bourgeois historiography in Romania defended the class interests of the bourgeoisie and of the landowners. It was also founded on idealist-metaphysical principles. [...] Therefore, the accomplishments of bourgeois historiography could be used in writing a scientific history of the motherland only in the context of their reconsideration on the basis of historical materialism.⁸⁵

⁸⁴ Important additional references for the history *smenovekhovstvo* group and their relationship with both the Bolshevik party and the other Russian émigré groups in Western Europe see Hilde Hardeman, *Coming to Terms with the Soviet Regime. The "Changing Signposts" Movement among Russian Émigrés in the Early 1920s* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1994) and Stuart Finkel, *On the Ideological Front. The Russian Intelligentsia and the Making of the Soviet Public Sphere* (New Haven/London: Yale University Press, 2007).

⁸⁵ "Prefață", Constantin Daicoviciu et al., *Istoria României. Volum I. Comuna primitivă. Sclavagismul. Perioada de trecere la feudalism* (București: Editura Academiei RPR, 1960), p. vi.

In other words, tradition was not rejected in principle. What the authors of the first volume did was to *adjust* arguments from the past to an interpretative framework corresponding to the nature of the Romanian communist regime.

The second volume's preface is rather harsher with pre-communist historians particularly because of the Marxist-Leninist interpretation of feudalism. The author, however, did take the time to underline that before 1945 there was considerable "accumulation and systematization of rich factual material, of numerous investigations, works and syntheses - particularly those of A. D. Xenopol and N. Iorga,..."⁸⁶ The main problem lay, as already indicated by Ș. Ștefănescu in an earlier programmatic article from 1957,⁸⁷ in the fact that most Romanian historians either did not recognize feudal relations in Romanian territories or they declared that these relations were a late import from the West. In this second case feudalism was perceived as a result of the superstructure and not the historical result of domestic socio-economic developments (i.e., class struggle and the evolution of the forces of production).

The second volume was officially coordinated by A. Oțetea, but in reality had been the responsibility of M. Berza, Ștefan Ștefănescu, and Damaschin Mioc (the first being the most important). These three were very close to B. Cămpina, the historian chosen to lead the work group for volume two. The very notion of feudalism, the volume's main topic, and the method adopted by its coordinators' mentor ran counter with most of Romanian pre-communist historiography. Or so it seemed in the preface, for in some issues again clear levels of continuity were obvious. Berza also inherited (both from Iorga and Cămpina) a strong dislike for the

⁸⁶ Andrei Oțetea et al., *Istoria României. Volum II*, p. v.

⁸⁷ Ștefan Ștefănescu, „Date cu privire la problema relațiilor feudale pe teritoriul Țării Românești în istoriografia românească”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 1, an X, 1957, pp. 199-221.

representatives of the “New School”, which also explains some of the critiques in the preamble.⁸⁸ Therefore, pre-1945 history-writing would be criticized because of its understanding of the role of the state. The latter’s real function had been masked by bourgeois historiography, that is, “that of controlling the majority of the population in the interests of an exploiting minority.” Pre-communist historians stressed the state’s role in defense against conquest, overlooking the fact that “defense interests only accelerated, but did not determine, the formation of central power”⁸⁹ These remarks came close to another interpretation proposed by Daicoviciu and Stănescu in the issue of *Studii* that celebrate 15 years of communist history-production. According to them, post-1945 research on state development in Romanian territories “drew the big picture of a succession of various forms of organization that can be truly called political regime... The state as dictatorship of the dominant class has also been, from period to period, the dictatorship of the determining forces from within the dominant class.” This rather interesting twist allowed the authors to stress that as long as “feudal centralization” and the “struggle for independence of the Romanian states” relied on a mass base, then political power would prosper. Once, class interests overshadowed national interest, then both centralization and independence would fall apart.⁹⁰ The overall deprecation of the history of the state was also the result a still pervasive preference for social and economic history.

The preface of the treatise’s third volume, written by Oțetea, was following a similar line with those of the first two parts of this monumental monograph. It first determined which were the classical studies for the scope of its research topics. In this case, again we find A. D. Xenopol with his *Istoria românilor din Dacia Traiană* and N Iorga with *Geschichte des rumänischen*

⁸⁸ Florin Constantiniu makes a similar remark in his *De la Răutu la Roller...*, pp. 248-249.

⁸⁹ Andrei Oțetea et al., *Istoria României. Volum II*, p. v.

⁹⁰ Daicoviciu și Stănescu, „Probleme principale...”, *Ibidem*, p. xc.

Volkes. The two books, “despite their methodological and interpretative fallacies, marked an important progress in the development of our historiography and they represented landmarks for the history of our culture.” One additional note was added: “Iorga’s new *Istoria românilor*, published in the last years of his life, though relying a great amount of information, it is not a progress in comparison to his German-language synthesis.” The latter remark sounded more as the personal evaluation of a historian socialized in the sharp debates between the “New School” and Iorga during the 1930s. Oțetea’s generational ethos might have kicked in a bit here. Indeed his follow up statement likely endorsed such interpretation: “critical analysis and interpretation were increasingly replaced by narrative history and by the act of putting together mere chronologies...in a succession without any causality or organic connection.”⁹¹ Oțetea’s critical assessment of pre-communist historiography was fundamentally based upon his understanding of the role of the historical materialist method in the writing of national history. To put it differently, his remarks were rather evolutionary than simply dismissive.

Last but not least, the preface to the fourth volume criticized pre-communist historiography on the basis of periodization. This had been a long-lasting sore point in the debates between 1957 and 1963. As I have already showed, matters of the periodization of modern and contemporary history could lead to chastisement by either party representatives or within the party ranks. In the preamble of the treatise’s volume, Iorga was criticized, for example, because he organized his periodization of modern history in reference only to the formation of the nation-state, not taking into account the latter phenomenon’s relationship with the evolution of capitalism. Others, such as Xenopol or Zeletin, were found wanting as well.

⁹¹ A.Oțetea, D.Prodan și M. Berza et al., *Istoria României. Volum III. Feudalism dezvoltat în secolul al XVII-lea și la începutul secolului al XVIII-lea. Destrămarea feudalismului și formarea relațiilor capitaliste* (București: Editura Academiei RPR, 1964), p. xi.

Overall, this preamble had a militant tone.⁹² The author⁹³ did grant important credit to A.D. Xenopol's interpretation of the most crucial events dealt with in this part of the treatise: 1848-49, 1859, and 1864. Nevertheless, both Iorga and him suffered from their disregard of the role of the masses in those events. A. D. Xenopol's and N. Iorga's writings on the modern period mentioned were considered useful sources for "they only limitedly clarified the main problems of the period in question." Besides their idealism, "these works suffered from a shaky documentary basis and they only sparingly deal with modern history." Under the circumstances, the author(s) declared emphatically that the volume "to a large degree has been the result of the activity of research and of the interpretation archives undergone by the collective of authors themselves."⁹⁴

A cautionary note is necessary here: despite the preface agitational approach, the content of the chapters themselves were much more in tone with the tendencies, by now in full bloom, toward a re-enchantment with national tradition. For the moment, one example will suffice. One of the volume's authors, Gh. Georgescu-Buzău, in an attempt to show how anti-feudal struggle was enriched by strivings to national emancipation, appeals again to Kogălniceanu. Thus, the communist historian finds himself locked in quotations about both the Nation's mission and history's national calling: "nations, and people alike, have a mission on this earth and they are responsible for their own evolution" and "Romanian history ought to be the guiding book, the guardian of our nationality."⁹⁵

Pre-1945 history-writing was gradually reintegrated in the narratives of the historical front in selective fashion, on the basis of the prerequisite of cultural revolution. The standards of

⁹² P. Constantinescu-Iași, V Maciu, et al., *Istoria României. Formarea și consolidarea orânduirii capitaliste* (București: Editura Academiei RPR, 1964), p. vi-x.

⁹³ though officially it might have been Petre Constantinescu-Iași, the text was most likely written with the help of other volume contributors, such as D. Berindei, V Cheresteșiu, or N N Constantinescu.

⁹⁴ *Idem.*, p. xvi.

⁹⁵ "Situația economică, socială și politică din țările române în ajunul revoluției de la 1848", *Idem.*, p. 22.

inquiry and research ordered by historical materialism and *partiinost* were indeed applied to science's genealogy as well. In 1959, Oțetea stated that “attempts to reconsider M Kogălniceanu, Vasile Pârvan, B P Hașdeu, A D Xenopol and others did not always go to the social roots of their ideas.”⁹⁶ But, a combination of factors mitigated any attempts of a novel radical break from ‘scientific’ tradition: overall transformations in the relationship between party and history starting from the very core of the Soviet bloc in Moscow; the shifting interests of the RWP toward regime individuality, which brought a renewed focus on self-centeredness in indentitarian master-narratives; the pressures within the historical front itself under conditions of polycentrism; the ascendancy of scientific personnel from the pre-communist period willing to acculturate; and, last but not least, the specificities of history-writing in Romania developed in its evolution from the second half of the 19th century.

At the beginning of 1961, V. Turok defined history, in *Literaturnaia gazeta*, as “the concentrated experience of many generations.”⁹⁷ A year later, Khrushchev announced at the Twenty-Second Congress of the CPSU that, in order for the wrongs done under Stalin to be corrected, “it was necessary that all this be recorded truthfully in the history of the Party.” His call will then be taken on by historians who developed it into a demand for more thorough research and better methodology. The following year, *Kommunist* published an article by I Smirnov that advocated a combination between commitment to good methodology, honest scholarship, and *partiinost*. According to the author, “party spirit demands political acuity and

⁹⁶ A Oțetea, “Dezvoltarea științei istorice românești după 23 august 1944”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 4, an XII, 1959, p. 42.

⁹⁷ Heer, *Politics and History*, p. 118.

qualifications in the approach to sources from which is drawn the factual basis of historical research.”⁹⁸

In similar fashion, E. Stănescu invoked, in 1960, Lenin’s authority to argue that “a concrete historical problem” was mapped out on the basis of “the facts that make up historical reality, its true life (*viața vie*); without them one cannot reach understanding. [...] Documents must be known and understood, taken as ‘witness depositions’ and evaluated on the basis of their plausibility. V. I. Lenin greatly valued those who studied history relying on archival sources.”⁹⁹

In Romania, just like in the Soviet Union, the calls for a return to methodology found a counterpart in an increased assertion among the ranks of party leadership of the imperative of “historical truth”.¹⁰⁰ Under pressure from outside (de-Stalinization and from possible diminishment of intra-bloc sovereignty) and from within (the process of entrenching a nationally-bound political discourse and identity), the RWP placed truth in a domestic context. Therefore historians were given the chance to rekindle their long standing mission of “priests of veracity” (Iorga) for national interest. In 1962, M Berza wrote in a report about his specialization trip to the Soviet Union, that only by taking on the fundamental task of scientifically re-assessing the people’s past, would historians truly contribute to the building of a new society; for past knowledge could help in understanding the present.¹⁰¹ His intervention was complemented by a later article pointing out to the fact that the process of understanding Romanian past by means of scientific history benefited from “renowned [earlier] contributions to the progress of knowing a series of facets of our national history.” In matters of ancient, medieval and the first part of

⁹⁸ *Idem*, pp. 126-130.

⁹⁹ Eugen Stănescu, „Din indicațiile metodologice ale lui V. I. Lenin cu privire la cercetarea marxistă a istoriei”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 2, an XIII, 1960. pp. 22-23.

¹⁰⁰ “adevărul istoric” is an obsessive formula throughout the November 30 – December 5, 1961 CC Plenum of the RWP.

¹⁰¹ M. Berza, „Cercetările de istorie universală în URSS”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 5, an XV, 1962, p.1249

Romania's modern history, individuals such as N Bălcescu, M Kogălniceanu, B P Hașdeu, G Barițiu, A D. Xenopol, N. Iorga, I Bogdan, V Pârvan had now already entered "the Pantheon of national culture."¹⁰² History was back to being national, tradition was re-established, and truth would now be determined by a complementary necessity – the Nation.

C. The Treatise – Searching for National History

1. Organizational premises

The conference of all 'workers' of the historical front, from November 1955, organized by the RPR Academy, concluded with the nomination of the editorial roster for each of the four volumes of the treatise. For the first one, the editor in chief was C. Daicoviciu; his deputy was E. Condurachi. They were accompanied by I. Nestor and Gh. Ștefan. The second one was split in two tomes: for the first, editor in chiefs were Barbu Cămpina and Ștefan Pascu; for the second, this position belonged to A. Oțetea, who was seconded by D. Prodan and M. Berza. For the third volume, editor in chief was V. Chereșteșiu, his deputy was Gh. Haupt; their assistants were P. Popovici and V. Maciu. After the death of B. Cămpina, Oțetea appeared as editor in chief for the second volume. He, however, did not get involved, in significant fashion, in the process writing of this volume. The latter will mostly be coordinated by Cămpina's followers Berza, Ștefănescu, and D. Mioc along with S. Pascu. The first three took on the task of finalizing the sections that Cămpina had been entrusted with sometimes using his unfinished texts.

For the forth volume, initially, editor in chief was M. Roller, helped by L. Banyai, Gh. Matei, and V. Hurmuz.¹⁰³ Upon his demise, Roller was replaced by P. Constantinescu-Iași. Moreover, during its drafting, the balance tilted in favor of the historians from the Academy's

¹⁰² Daicoviciu și Stănescu, „Probleme principale...”, p. lxxxviii

¹⁰³ Anexa II, Țugui, “Informare...”, *Ibidem*, f.9.

institutes or teaching at the University. V. Maciu became Constantinescu-Iași's deputy. The two of them were helped by V. Cheresteșiu, Dan Berindei and N. N. Constantinescu (titular of the national political economy chair at Bucharest University). Constantinescu-Iași was also nominated to coordinate the second tome on the modern period (1878-1918). In the context of historiographical unsettledness and a shifting party line in relation with interpretations of the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th, this fifth volume will never be finalized. It remained at a drafting stage.

Despite the initial influx of historians from the Institute of Party History, which was meant to hold in check the 'bourgeois appetites' of 'traditional' historians, in the end, the latter got the upper hand. The personnel dynamics of the historical front reflected directly in the profile of the groups of authors involved in the creation of the treatise of national history. At the same time, the thematic debates from 1956 until 1963 would provide considerable impact on the final form of the chapters in each of the four volumes. The weight of tradition, the search for a usable past, the gradual re-integration of pre-communist historians (even those previously jailed or legally reprimanded), and the increasing preoccupation of the party with formulating a self-centered identitarian narrative, they all influenced and factored in the final versions of the chapters of the four-volume treatise. *Tratatul de istorie a României* ultimately confirmed the re-professionalization and the national focus within the historical front.

Though I have often quoted various official statements about the treatise, either on the part of historians or of party leaders, I believe two additional remarks should not be overlooked. One belongs to L. Răutu, the chief ideologue of the Romanian communism up to 1965. At a meeting with historians in May 1957, he declared that "the drafting of this treatise must bring clarification, resolution to some of the fundamental issues of historical science. It must offer a

scientific, rigorous, precise big-picture, freed of any subjectivist elements in reference to the historical development of the Romanian people, of its state existence.”¹⁰⁴ The second important statement about the purpose of the treatise was formulated in 1960, upon the publication of the first volume, by its editor, C. Daicoviciu:

the new *History of Romania* is meant to fully serve the working people in the building of socialism in our country. The general drafting committee correctly indicated the character that this work should have: one of high scientific standard, capable of meeting any demand of a scholar, but at the same time equally accessible to all working people willing to educate themselves and to know the history of struggle, creation, and progress of their forerunners.¹⁰⁵

To sum up both statements, the treatise functioned on two levels: it was the definitive scientific product of Marxist-Leninist history-production; and, it was the ultimate educational and reference tool that could sustain social, economic, and political mobilization and an individual's historical enlightenment. In other words, this monograph's final objective was to provide the scientific foundation of socialist patriotism.

In order to achieve the lofty goals set for the treatise, the collectives of historians working at the four volumes were supposed to considerably re-consider the writing of national history on the basis of historical materialism. But, as F. Constantiniu duly noted, not many historians were up to the task. From the new generation (post-1945), “the only one who was prepared to pursue such considerable re-conceptualization was Barbu Cămpina. He did leave behind a set of ideas and some texts, but his followers did not have the brilliant dialectical spirit that characterized their mentor.”¹⁰⁶ Moreover, Cămpina's interventions in the historians' debates from 1955 to 1958 were many times on the same par with Oțetea's or Daicoviciu's: the necessity of method, the importance of facts and documents, and the role of the lessons of tradition. He went so far as

¹⁰⁴ „Ședința din 13 mai 1957”, *Ibidem*, f. 82.

¹⁰⁵ Constantin Daicoviciu, “‘Istoria României’, sarcină principală a istoricilor din patria noastră. Realizări și probleme”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 3, an XIII, 1960. pp. 6.

¹⁰⁶ Constantiniu, *De la Răutu și Roller...*, p.239.

to almost dismiss his own work: “we, young historians, are guilty, by the nature of things, of simplifications and fictionalization. My own book contributed to this, but I hope in a year or two, I will succeed in re-writing it in order to rehabilitate myself for these mistakes.”¹⁰⁷ Rather than a reinvention of national historiography, which in itself was rather doubtful to expect, the treatise succeeded in constructing a synthesis of ideological tenets and axioms with new emphases on history-writing (social or cultural history), and a significant return to established forms of interpretation. By 1960, this was the way even authors themselves perceived the monographic project:

...in completing this important work, historians correctly understood their task and drafted it following persistently the Marxist method of presenting the historical process. [...] On a wide scale they used everything that was valuable from the old Romanian historiography [...] The collective of authors successfully described the three main facets of historical development: social-economic history, political history, and cultural history.¹⁰⁸

2. Matters of Periodization

The first issue of contention in the process of writing the national history treatise was that of periodization. Despite the general principle, in line with historical materialism, of the central role of “the forces determining a society’s structure, the character of the socio-economic formation, and the transition from one social order to another,”¹⁰⁹ much debating room will be left on the impact of the superstructure upon historical development. As I have already shown in the first section of this chapter, at the very core of late Stalinism was an emphasis on language, consciousness, and culture as dependent of national character. This element combined with the durability of pre-communist themes set the stage for challenges to the periodization advocated by *praktiki* such as Roller or Constantinescu-Iași. There were four topics of conflict in this case: the

¹⁰⁷ „Ședința din 10 mai 1957”, *Ibidem*, f. 25

¹⁰⁸ A. Oțetea, “‘Istoria României’, sarcină principală...”, *Ibidem*, pp. 9-10.

¹⁰⁹ Andrei Oțetea, „Problema periodizării...”, *Ibidem*, pp. 104-105.

emergence of a Dacian slave state; the timeframe for ethnogenesis; the demarcation between middle and modern history; and the separation point between modern and contemporary history.¹¹⁰

In the case of the first two issues, Roller's imprint was significant. The Dacian slave state was a sort of pet project for him. The same could be said about the subject of ethnogenesis as a venue for bringing in the Slav element and dismissing the Roman one. On the slave state and the denunciation of Roman role over Dacia Roller initially found significant support from C. Daicoviciu, though other archeologists joined in (D. Tudor or B. Mitrea). However, as work progressed at the first volume, upon Roller's demise and the pressure from scholars who rejected the idea of slave-order among Dacians (I. Nestor, M. Petrescu-Dâmbovița, or H. H. Stahl), these two topics were transformed into pretexts to either re-affirm the importance of the autochthonous factor ("the Dacian civilization" – E. Condurachi) or to reach a novel reading of the role of Roman conquest. On this latter aspect, M. Macrea¹¹¹ offered the following characterization:

The Roman conquest in Dacia has two facets. It was established in Dacia by way of arms, through violence. It was always maintained because of the presence of a numerous army and a strong defensive system. All these considered, the Roman rule did not have a destructive character. On the contrary, the time of Roman rule over Dacia was, beyond any doubt, a progress compared to the previous period from the point of view of the general evolution of society.¹¹²

The ideological insertion of the slave-state theme to Romanian history-production ultimately did not affect the overall master-narrative about the origins of the Romanian people. The struggle against the Romans of the occupied and the free Dacians only added further arguments to their

¹¹⁰ Țugui, "Informare...", *Ibidem*, f. 1 and „Notă cu privire la situația în domeniul științei istorice”, 30 aprilie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no. 5/1957, ff. 44-47.

¹¹¹ Macrea was member of the pre-1945 archeology school in Cluj, a good friend of C. Daicoviciu. In early 1950s he was not allowed to publish under his real name, using the penname of M. Mihail. By late 1950s, he was head of sector at the Institute of History in Cluj and professor at the History Department of the „Babeș-Bolyai” University.

¹¹² M Macrea, „caracterul stăpînirii romane”, in Constantin Daicoviciu et al., *Istoria Romîniei. Volum I...*, p. 345.

continuity despite Romanization. At the same time, the latter process was enhanced, according to the authors of the first volume, by the endurance of a superior substratum – the Dacians. Consequently, Marxist-Leninist premises generated national readings of ancient history. One author pertinently remarked:

the continuity of Dacian populations and the Romanization seemed irreconcilable...The Romanian nation was the result of an amalgamation of Roman culture with elements of the previous pre-Roman culture. The focus in historiography was not [anymore, n.a.] on an precise identification of the roles of either pre-roman or Roman cultures in the creation of a provincial culture. The central matter was the nation itself. From this point of view, the new culture was superior to other Roman provincial cultures because it was founded on a substratum superior to others...The two concepts merged into one: the continuity of autochthonous population in the province Dacia and their total Romanization.¹¹³

Indeed, Romanian archeologists employed the Marxist-Leninist framework (struggle against conquest, the definitive role of internal forces, the progressive nature of the slave-order in socio-economic development) in order to reinforce two fundamental themes of pre-1945 archeology: the exceptional antiquity of the populations that made up the Romanian people; and, the ascendancy of Dacian-Roman culture in the region. In other words, a matter of periodization turned into a framework for bringing in usable past.

The second problem in the periodization debate was the end of feudalism and the beginning of Romania's modern history. Some historians insisted over the relevance of the years 1821 (Tudor Vladimirescu's rebellion, which was perceived as movement of both social and national emancipation) and 1828 (the Adrianopole Treaty that diminished the influence of the Ottoman Empire of Romanian principalities and allowed the latter to expand their economy exchanges, while Tsarist political leverage was increased over them). But the majority on the historical front insisted on the year 1848 – the time of the bourgeois national revolution in the Romanian territories. 1848 brought together all camps in the profession because of the clustered

¹¹³ Florian Matei-Popescu, „Imaginea Daciei romane...”, p. 274.

interpretation of this historical moment. First of all, maintaining this year's centrality was a form of discursive continuity with the pre-1955 communist historiography that initially transformed the revolution into the legitimizing predecessor of the community takeover. Second, the 1848 movement encompassed all three Romanian territories: Moldova, Wallachia, and Transylvania. In the context of the decision by both historians and party to treat the history of these territories as unitary,¹¹⁴ 1848 offered the possibility of synchronized entry into modernity of all the lands that made up contemporary Romania. In conclusion, the decision over the year of 1848 as the beginning of modern history would be made on a projection of palingenesis typical of the late 1950s: "it was an event that raised the fundamental problems regarding our social and political rebirth."¹¹⁵ The revolution became the culmination of "a program of social and national emancipation. [...] As the overthrow of feudalism was a common task of the bourgeoisie and the peasantry in the Wallachia, Moldova, and Transylvania, the revolution will begin simultaneously in all the three Romanian countries."¹¹⁶ The fundamental difference from the 1948-1955 historiography was that the creation of a Romanian nation in a nation-state became the motif force for the built-up to 1848 and the revolution's main objective. Or to use a Herderian metaphor often employed by various historians before and after 1945 – "the union of Romanian people's scattered braches into one trunk."¹¹⁷

¹¹⁴ According to P. Ţugui, this decision was taken in 1956. However, reports on the initial discussion over the treatise show that this opinion was far from unanimous. In 1957, Ţugui noted that "some historians specialized on the study of Transylvania argued that the latter should be studied separately from the two Principalities, because it had developed differently socio-economically under circumstances of the Austrian-Hungarian rule." See Ţugui, "Informare...", *Ibidem*, f. 3 and Pavel Ţugui, *Istoria şi limba română...*, pp. 107-108.

¹¹⁵ A. Ţetea, "Problema periodizării.", *Ibidem*, p. 17.

¹¹⁶ A. Ţetea, "Concluzie", in A. Ţetea, D. Prodan şi M. Berza et al., *Istoria României. Volum III. Feudalism dezvoltat în secolul al XVII-lea şi la începutul secolului al XVIII-lea. Destrămarea feudalismului şi formarea relaţiilor capitaliste* (Bucureşti: Editura Academiei RPR, 1964), p. 1152.

¹¹⁷ Ţetea employs this metaphor in his sub-chapter "Formarea naţiunii burgheze române" in A. Ţetea et al., *Istoria României. Volum III*, p. 594.

The third subject of contention in matters of periodization was the conflicting and overlapping interpretations of the years 1918 (the unification of all Romanian territories) and 1917 (“The Great October Socialist Revolution”). M Roller and Constantinescu-Iași insisted over the preeminence of the 1917 over 1918. The first one even insisted that August 23, 1944 marked the beginning of contemporary Romanian history. Based on this argument, Roller advanced the idea of a treatise in only 3 volumes, the last one including *both* modern and contemporary history. The final word on this issue of periodization belonged to Constantinescu-Iași, who considered that 1917 represented the end of Romania’s modern history. According to him, “1918 was only a beginning in Romania’s history not an end of a period.” The year 1917 signified the inception of the revolutionary overthrow of the bourgeois-landowner society that appeared after 1848.¹¹⁸ As already discussed in a previous chapter, one dominant theme in the historiography of Romania’s 20th century, between 1956 and 1964, was that from 1917 until 1920, Romania experienced a revolutionary situation that was crushed by domestic ruling classes aided by imperialist powers. In other words, according to individuals such as Constantinescu-Iași, Liveanu, or Banyai, 1918 represented a point in time when the will for social emancipation, political liberation and unity of Romanians could have generated a radical transformation of society through the accomplishment of a bourgeois-democratic revolution. But, like many times in the past, the bourgeoisie betrayed its historical role, making a pact with the landowners and by ‘selling’ the country to imperialists. The 1918 popular ideals of national, social, and economic freedom will only be fulfilled in 1945 with the coming to power of the communists.¹¹⁹ Maciu’s

¹¹⁸ “Dezbaterile privind machete volumului IV din Tratatul ‘Istoria României’”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 5, an XIV, 1961, p. 1079.

¹¹⁹ See C. Daicoviciu, L. Banyai, V. Cheresteșiu, V Liveanu, „Lupta revoluționară a maselor...” *Ibidem*, L. Banyai, „V. I. Lenin despre patrie și patriotism”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 1, an XIII, 1960. pp. 33-43, and V Liveanu, „Unele probleme privind România...”, *Ibidem*.

or Oțetea's counter-arguments that the First World War was just because it fulfilled a "necessary historical mission – the unification of Romanians", or that 1918 brought about universal vote and the beginning of agrarian reform were dismissed on two grounds. The first was that these historians conflated state interest with the interest of the people: the bourgeoisie and the masses did not want the same thing from the union and the war. The second was that they confused formal, bourgeois democracy with popular democracy. According to a document in 1957, a common ground was reached through the decision that volume three would end with the unification of 1918, while volume four would start with a discussion of the October Revolution of 1917. After 1966, Liveanu, Constantinescu-Iași, Banyai, and others who upheld the above described thesis will be accused of anti-national views.

In the end, the periodization that applied to the published version of *Tratatul de istorie a Romaniei* was the following: volume I – from the oldest times to tenth century; volume II – first tome, from Xth century to the XVIIth, second tome, from the re-establishment of Ottoman domination over Romanian territories after the 1600 unification until the years prior to 1848; volume III – first tome, from 1848 until 1878. In fact, the above demarcation was an adjustment between what was published and what was discussed in both archival and published materials. It is obvious that the second tome of the volume II became volume III. And the first tome of volume III became volume IV. If the first three volume, despite post-publication amendments, were, for a long time, the pride and glory of the historical front, the perception over the forth one is best expressed by its 1978 description in *Enciclopedia istoriografiei romanesti*. The author of the entry, Florin Constantiniu, stated that: "the authors pursued a *circumstantial* analysis of the social-political forces engaged in the struggle [revolution, independence and unity] and of the

motives and results of their actions.”¹²⁰ The accelerated reconsideration of the state in Romania’s history, between 1964 and 1966, ultimately blocked the finalization and publication of the fourth volume.

3. Volume One

The first volume of *Tratat de istorie a României* was the culmination of the great emphasis laid by the communist regime on archeology. This branch of the historical front expanded after 1945 to dimensions unknown in the pre-communist period. Two crucial factors generated such development: Roller’s intervention in the field and the constant defensive line adopted by decision-makers both within the Party and at the Academy in relation to the continuity of indigenous populations and of the Romanian people on the country’s territory. For example, in 1955, a report on the RPR Academy’s activity lauded the fact that “there were thirteen archeological sites through the entire Romania.” The scientific results that they provided “testified for the continuity of human habitats on Romanian territory through centuries.”¹²¹ The combination between the obsession of timelessness and continuity only played to pre-existent priorities and practices of domestic archeology.

At the same time, those involved in the writing of the first volume had direct links with the pre-communist founders of this field. I. Nestor had been the closest collaborator of I. Andrieșescu, while M. Petrescu-Dâmbovița was the latter’s assistant. Nistor and Dâmbovița were two of the authors of the first volume.¹²² Moreover, V Pârvan had been the president of “Dacia Superioara” University in Cluj, acting as the mentor of an entire generation of archeologists,

¹²⁰ Florin Constantiniu, “Istoria României” in *Ibidem*, p. 468.

¹²¹ “Dare de seamă asupra activității științifice a Academiei RPR pe anul 1954”, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.24/1955, f. 40.

¹²² M. Petrescu-Dâmbovița, „Profesorul Ioan Andrieșescu. Omul și opera”, *MSȘIA*, 1994, 19, p.33-43.

most of whom will take over after 1945 under the leadership of C. Daicoviciu. At the same time, the Romanian School in Rome, founded by Pârvan, will host and educate a large cohort of historians that played significant roles in the profession, particularly after 1956: D. Berciu, E. Condurachi, C. Daicoviciu, N. Lascu, F. Pall, Șt. Pascu, D. Pippidi, V. Vătășianu, R. Vulpe, Vladimir Dumitrescu, Șt. Bezdechi, Al. Marcu, Ștefan Pascu, Mihai Berza.¹²³ Indeed, as R. Vulpe mentioned in his article about Pârvan in 1957, the latter was the founder and the towering figure of Romanian archeology.

At the very core of this field lay Pârvan's emphasis on the centrality of the "Geto-Dacian kin", which "moral specificities reminded sometimes of those of the Romanian peasant."¹²⁴ Moreover, V Pârvan advocated a perfect ethnographic unity, first Dacian, then, after Trajan [the emperor who conquered Dacia, n.a.], Dacian-Roman, on the whole territory" encompassed by the Dnister, Tisa, Danube and the Black Sea." He contended that the post-1918 territory was "an undeviable whole, which parts can fully be understood only through each other. Archeology's task was to take this reality into account."¹²⁵ Pârvan took his point further: the Dacian-Roman people were "not only the largest, but also the eldest, on the basis of its ethnic and cultural origins, among those living in Southeastern Europe."¹²⁶ Last but not least, Pârvan considered that „the Roman idea must be brought back to its royal purity, permeated as much as possible with its original-ancient ethos. And our reaction to it must be to the greatest extent intensified as national-Dacian-Roman."¹²⁷ In conclusion, Pârvan imposed a framework centered on the absolute unity and antiquity of Dacian-Roman populations in the region, establishing a direct

¹²³ Lucian Nastasă, *Itinerarii spre lumea savantă. Tineri din spațiul românesc la studii în străinătate (1864-1944)* (Cluj-Napoca: Limes, 2006), p. 192

¹²⁴ Radu Vulpe, „Activitatea științifică a istoricului Vasile Pârvan”, *Ibidem*, p. 29

¹²⁵ „Probleme de arheologie în România”, pp. 241-247 in Vasile Pârvan, *Scrisori...*

¹²⁶ „Contribuții epigrafice la istoria creștinismului daco-roman”, pp. 569 in *Idem*

¹²⁷ *Apud* Radu Vulpe, „Prefață”, p. 8, *Idem*

connection between Romanians and their ancestors. He postulated the unity of this population throughout the entire national territory, while perceiving the Roman element as an elevating civilizational addition to a fundamentally original Geto-Dacian culture.

Pârvan's legacy could be invoked on two simultaneous directions: first, as validation for the emphasis on the autochthonous human element, i.e. the Geto-Dacians; second, as authority for the rehabilitation of the Roman factor, in the sense of recognition of its constructive and creative role in the history of the Romanian people. Additionally, Pârvan's argument about the ethnographic unity of the national territory, verifiable by archeological work, only re-enforced the vision of a continuous ethno-cultural whole through history that was so pervasive starting with the 1960s. It could be argued that Romanian archeology was encoded with a symptom of transhistorical ethnic homogeneity employable as legitimating tool for purposes of national interest. With these theses in mind, it is no coincidence that Pârvan and I. Andrieșescu were in close contact with G. Kossinna. Andrieșescu took his PhD with the German scholar, while Pârvan constantly exchanged letters with him.¹²⁸ Pârvan's views come very close to Kossinna's axiom of archeology as a "preeminently national discipline". Similarly to Pârvan's belief in the correlation between territory, *ethnie*, and archeology, Kossinna argued that archeology alone could project an identity far enough into the past. The key was to "identify a geographic area which seems appropriate for the homeland of a particular tribe, people, or social group [...] After that it is just a matter of getting the culture history of that group out of the ground or, if that has been done already, to reconstruct it from existing excavated material."¹²⁹

¹²⁸ Alexandru Zub, *Vasile Pârvan: corespondență și acte. Studii și documente* (București: Editura Minerva, 1973)

¹²⁹ Bettina Arnold, "Justifying Genocide. Archeology and the Construction of Difference," in Alexander Laban Hinton (ed.), *Annihilating Difference. The Anthropology of Genocide* (Los Angeles/London: University of California Press, 2002), pp. 95-116.

The fundamental premise to this paradigm was that “language is the essential trait, the very essence of the ethnic entities they try to recover studying material remains.” Continuity in material culture on a given territory, more exactly the continuity of technological and stylistic traditions, was interpreted as ethnic continuity on that land.¹³⁰ The fundamental concept in Kossina’s writings was that of “archeological culture”: “clearly defined, sharply distinctive, bounded archaeological provinces corresponding unquestionably to the territories of particular peoples and tribes.” In other words, Kossina employed a retrospective method, which involved “using the (ethnic) conditions of the present (or the historically documented past) to infer the situation in prehistory.”¹³¹ The existence and assigned quality to these cultures were for him proofs of ‘civilized’ peoples (Kulturvölker), or culturally creative peoples versus “primitive” peoples (Naturvölker) or culturally passive peoples.¹³² This conceptual background set up essentializing discourses about a Nation, its historical rights over a territory and about its exceptionalism in relation with others.¹³³

The fact that Romanian archeologists picked up on Kossina’s writing in the first half of the 20th century was no exception in Europe. What is significant is the fact that after 1945, despite an all out contestation of Kossina’s influence because of his paradigm’s connection with Nazi archeology, Romanian archeology maintained a strong ethnic understanding of the German scholar’s concept of archeological culture. The first volume of *Tratat de istorie a României* was

¹³⁰ Alexandru Niculescu, “The Material Dimension of Ethnicity,” *New Europe College Yearbook* 01 / 1997/1998, p. 203 and p. 239.

¹³¹ Ulrich Veit, “Ethnic Concepts in German Prehistory: A Case Study on the Relationship between Cultural Identity and Archaeological Objectivity,” in S. J. Shennan (ed.), *Archeological Approaches to Cultural Identity* (London/New York: Routledge, 1994), p. 39 and p. 41.

¹³² Niculescu, “The Material Dimension...”, p. 208.

¹³³ Kossina’s theory will be held at high esteem by Nazi archeologists and regime, providing the founding for theoretization of Germanicness and of racial theories. For details see Bernard Mees, *The Science of the Swastika* (New York/Budapest: CEU Press, 2008), p. 84 [e.g., Germanicness as a metaphysical form of organic totality] and Heinrich Härke (ed), *Archaeology, Ideology and Society: The German Experience* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2000).

fundamentally constructed around the argumentative and heuristic value of these cultures for the theses of the origin, ancientness, originality, and continuity of the Romanian people or of the populations that laid at their foundation. At the same time, an additional evidence of the Kossinnian approach is the fact that the collective that worked at the first volume functioned under the tutorship of the Commission for the Study of the Formation of the Romanian People and Language. By the end of the 1950s, the main purpose of the collective and of the commission would be to define the origin and early evolution of Romanians as an ethnic community: “a named human populations with shared ancestry myths, histories and cultures, having an association with a specific territory, and a sense of solidarity.”¹³⁴ Despite initial heated debates on the correct scientific exposition about this community or in spite of Roller’s initial insistence on the Slavic element, the final results were not far from pre-communist presentation of the subject in question.

All things considered, I agree with F. Constantiniu, who stated that the first volume of the treatise was the first monographic attempt to put together all the archeological material and information gather from 1945 onwards. It was the most important endeavor up to then to analyze and re-interpret the written sources on the basis of new findings in archeology.¹³⁵ The second chapter of the volume, entitled “The Geographic Characterization of the RPR’s Territory”, set up the main premises the monograph was founded upon. According to the author, Cluj based geographer, Tiberiu Morariu, “the historical development of the Romanian people is tightly connected to the territory which it and its ancestors inhabited, without any interruption, since the oldest times.” Moreover, “the entire history of the Romanian people shows its creative abilities, its inventive spirit, its heroism in battle, the willingness for sacrifice, their burning love for the

¹³⁴ Anthony D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origin of Nations* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986), p. 32.

¹³⁵ Constantiniu, *De la Roller și Răutu...*, p. 240.

motherland, work perseverance, resolve and optimism, along with hospitality and the will to live in peace with all world's peoples.”¹³⁶ Morariu expressed both a national and a socialist thesis. He was making a perennialist statement about an ethnic community that seem to have mastered from the very beginning of history socialist ethics and patriotism. The preface then continued to formulating the other two cardinal theses of the volume: the first – “Marxist theory convincingly proved that the true motif of progress is the internal forces and the uninterrupted thread of their development.” The volume rejected the idea of a dominant role of migrations or the providential intervention of “this or that conquest.” The second thesis subsequently followed: “the central problem of our ancient history – the formation of the Romanian language and people – imposed another demonstration of the deep roots on which the Romanian people grew: the Dacian stratum and the decisive Roman influence [...] the Slavs will become, through assimilation, the third component of the Romanian people.”¹³⁷ The model created was that of an *ethie* formed by a process of coalescence¹³⁸ - the coming together by processes of amalgamation of separate units and of absorption of one unit by another.

The specific pre-history of the indigenous elements that made up the Romanian people and language, the fact that before amalgamation they succeed in creating a civilization, endows

¹³⁶ Tiberiu Morariu, “Caracterizarea geografică a teritoriului RPR” in Daicoviciu et al., *Istoria României. Volum I...*, p. xiii and p. xxvi. Morariu became standing member of the RPR Academy in 1955, being part of the group of ‘bourgeois specialists’ deemed trustworthy by the regime. His views however seem to have been very close to those of Simion Mehedinți, the founder of contemporary geographical studies in Romania. See Grigore Posea, “Școala Națională doctorală în geografie a profesorului Tiberiu Morariu”, in *Analele Universității Spiru Haret, Seria Geografie*, nr. 8 (București: Editura România de Măine, 2005), pp. 7-10. In 1963, Morariu will become dean of the Depart of Biology-Geography Department of the University in Cluj.

¹³⁷ “Preface”, Daicoviciu et al., *Istoria României. Volum I...* pp. xxx-xxxi and pp. xxxv-vi

¹³⁸ Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity* (London: Penguin, 1991), pp. 23-24.

them with authenticity and originality.¹³⁹ For example, the authors of the chapter „The Formation of the Romanian People and Language” postulated that

the Romanian language is the creation of the Romanian people. They forged it from the popular Latin adopted by our Geto-Dacian ancestors from the Roman colonists with whom them mingled. They added to it the Geto-Dacian idiom, spoken before Romanization, borrowing numerous elements from the tongue of the Slavs that settled in Dacia and Moesia. Everything that distinguishes Romanian from the Latin it is founded upon or from other Romance languages - the Latin grammatical structure to the smallest detail that is different from the Romans' language; the Romanian vocabulary, majoritarian Latin in its main base of words with many new nuances of meaning, unknown in the ancient times; the richness of idiomatic phrases, of the sayings that allow Romanian language to express infinite meanings and feelings – all these are the fruits of the creative power of our people. The Romanian language is therefore the Latin inherited from father to son, from the Ancient times up to present day, modified by successive generations.¹⁴⁰

The quote clearly shows the internationalization of Stalin's principle that “language remained basically the same despite radically different superstructures associated with the periods of feudalism, capitalism, and socialism.”¹⁴¹ Or better said, its essence was constant, while further enriching appeared by means of the people's creative proficiency. The continuity of language and the people were mutually reinforcing, constituting a perfectly circular argumentative construct for historical rights and cultural self-centeredness. The fundamental presupposition of the axiom enunciated at the beginning of the above fragment was that of a “primordial attachment” based on “congruities of blood, speech, and custom.”¹⁴² The premise of such primordial bond warranted the same authors to declare “the consciousness of the language's

¹³⁹ For example Daicoviciu considered that “once Dacia was subdued and the Dacian state disappears, the flourishing culture of the Geto-Dacian people comes to an end. The superior, standardized Roman life and civilization will replace it, without though being able to uproot it entirely. For tens of years, the Dacian people will rebel against their conquerors in order to regain its freedom, to preserve its language, and cultural traditions.” In C-tin Daicoviciu, “apariția și formarea relațiilor sclavagiste în Dacia”, Daicoviciu et al., *Istoria României. Volum I...*, p. 338.

¹⁴⁰ C.-tin Daicoviciu, E. Petrovici, Gh. Ștefan, „Formarea popoului și limbii Române”, in Daicoviciu et al., *Istoria României. Volum I...*, p. 778.

¹⁴¹ Pollock, *Stalin...*, p. 124.

¹⁴² Clifford Geertz argued that primordial bonds function as follows: “One is bound to one's kinsman, one's neighbour, one's fellow believer, ipso facto; as the result not merely of personal affection, practical necessity, common interest, or incurred obligation, but at least in great part by virtue of some unaccountable absolute import attributed to the very tie itself.” See Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (London: Fontana, 1973), pp. 259-260.

Romance nature and of the Roman origin was never really extinguished. The fact that it had been preserved is confirmed by the reality that, throughout centuries, all the members of this people never stopped calling themselves *Romanians*.¹⁴³

The first volume of the treatise focused, as already discussed, on proving the persistence of the Dacian population and its vital contribution to ethnogenesis. For example, M. Macrea concluded his chapter on Dacia's population after the Roman conquest by arguing that

far from being exterminated, Dacians will Romanize...contributing not only to the formation of a popular culture that will remain in place even after the Empire's retreat from the province, but also to the province's life, and to the creation of a Romanized population North of the Danube. The latter, a result of the Dacians' assimilation, of their culture, will become the central element in the process of the formation of the Romanian people and language."¹⁴⁴

In line with the general argument about the valid proofs for the existence and endurance of an ethnic community, the first volume assigned a special section on the "language of the Geto-Dacians" and its significant level of development. The author was I. I. Russu, an epigraphist who published in 1959 (a new edition in 1967) a volume on this topic. Russu succeeded in identifying "no less than 160 words belonging to the Dacian substratum, which, with their derivatives, could represent around 10 percent of the basic word stock of the Romanian language."¹⁴⁵ Despite his highly debatable approach, Russu's conclusions fit the bill for an underlining thesis of the treatise: contemporary Romanians had a perceptible Dacian coloring.¹⁴⁶

At the same time, the continuity of the autochthonous population was the result of its constant rebellion against the Romans. Two authors went to great pains to locate the first example of a "tradition of struggle" of the Romanian people in the evolution of the Roman province of Dacia – D. Tudor and D. Berciu. Both of them gained professional stature before

¹⁴³ Daicoviciu, Petrovici, Ștefan, "Formarea...", *Ibidem*, p. 798.

¹⁴⁴ M. Macrea, „Populația provinciei: coloniști și autohtoni”, *ibidem*, p. 396.

¹⁴⁵ Boia, *History and Myth...*, p. 105. Also I. I. Russu, *Limba traco-dacilor* (București: Editura Academiei RPR, 1959).

¹⁴⁶ For Russu's contribution in the first volume of the treatise see pp. 260-262.

1945, but they will bandwagon to Roller's reading of Romania's prehistory.¹⁴⁷ However, they altered this initial thesis in the first volume of the treatise. For example, Tudor argued that the main group that was exploited under the newly installed Roman slave-order was the indigenous population. The latter was allied with poor colonists and other slaves and many a times its revolts were coordinated with attacks against the province of free Dacians. In this interpretative context, Roller's thesis of the liquidation of Roman rule in Dacia was given a twist: the group that engineered it was made up of basically the lower classes of the same population mix that formed the Romanian people. In other words, this reading of class struggle into ancient history fused social emancipation with a primary form of national struggle.¹⁴⁸

More importantly, what proved to be a sore point in the writing of the first volume was the role of the Slavs in the formation of the Romanian people. The conclusion of the collective was that

The Romanian people and language, the result of the Romanization of the autochthonous Dacian-Moesic element, of the gradual assimilation of the Slavs and of other populations settled on the territory of contemporary Romania, were formed in the last centuries of the first millennium on the territory North of the Danube, with its nucleus in the hill and mountain lands of Dacia.¹⁴⁹

However, an earlier version of this chapter included the following formulation: "the Romanian people, the result of the Romanization of the indigenous Dacian-Moesic element *and of the Slav ethnic and linguistic contribution* was formed at the end of the first millennium North of Danube

¹⁴⁷ During the first meeting of historians about the treatise's first volume, it was decided that the term "prehistory" will be dropped in favor of that of "ancient history". The latter was considered to give the proper description of the first stages of the people's history, while the former was perceived to place them outside of history itself. See „Discuții asupra machetei vol. I al 'Istoriei României'", *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 3, an XIII, 1960. p. 24.

¹⁴⁸ For example: "the antislave struggle in Dacia was led by the exploited indigenous peasantry, by the free urban paupers, the colonists and slaves having a secondary role. The kinship with Dacian tribes from outside the borders of the province ensured their alliance with the autochthonous population. During Aurelian's time, this solidarity against the slave order amounted to a successful cast out of Roman rule in Dacia." D. Tudor, "Lupta împotriva stăpânirii romane și a exploatării sclavagiste" in *Ibidem*, p. 435.

¹⁴⁹ Daicoviciu, Petrovici, Ștefan, *Ibidem*, p. 808.

with nucleus the intra- and extra-Carpathian regions of the former Roman province of Dacia.”¹⁵⁰

[my emphasis] The difference in the two formulations was essential. The second basically placed the process of Romanization on the same level with the of the Slavic contribution (*aportul slav*), even suggesting the simultaneity of the two processes. There was basically no path-breaking departure from Roller’s description of Romanian ethnogenesis.¹⁵¹ Miron Constantinescu, the author of the report (addressed directly to Gheorghiu Dej) I am quoting from, underscored the central problem of with this initial version of the definition:

the Romanization – was the Dacian-Moesic element the only one that was Romanized, or wasn’t the Slav element, which ‘in bringing its ethnic and linguistic contribution’ after the fourth century, the subject of a process of fusion, assimilation by the autochthonous Dacian-Roman element, as well? It is our opinion that the Roman character of our people and the Slav’s assimilation need to be formulated clearly. If South of the Danube the Thracian-Illyric Romanized population was partly Slavicized, the Dacian-Roman people Romanized the Slav population settled North of the river after the fourth century.¹⁵²

Dej underlined in red the second sentence in the quote. The intervention of the ‘red specialist’ in the definition of the Romanian people cannot be overestimated. By counter-posing the two quotations, it is obvious that Constantinescu’s remarks were taken into account and that they produced a small, but crucial modification on the definition of Romanian ethnogenesis. Last but not least, at one point, Constantinescu stated that “the Romance character of the Romanian language, and, by implication of the Romanian people, does not appear clearly enough, though it is mentioned in some sections.” Dej’s reaction was prompt, as he scribbled on the side of the document “Why is that?”¹⁵³

¹⁵⁰ Miron Constantinescu, „Observații la proiectul de Istoria României volum I”, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.34/1960, f. 3. Constantinescu did not write this report on his own. At the time, he created a collective for review than undersigned their reports. This report has at the beginning a note hand-written by Constantinescu that reads as follows: “Comrade Dej...about Marx’s works on the Romanians, I respectfully request an appointment, for I have a proposal I know only you can resolve.” (f. 3)

¹⁵¹ See *Istoria R.P.R. Manual pentru învățământul mediu*, sub redacția Acad. Mihail Roller (București: Editura de Stat Didactică și Pedagogică, 1952), pp. 54-55.

¹⁵² Constantinescu, *Idem*.

¹⁵³ Miron Constantinescu, *Ibidem*, f. 3.

After his purge in 1957-1958, Constantinescu was relocated to the Academy's Institute of History in Bucharest, in 1962 becoming head of its modern history section. One author correctly pointed out that, in the 1960s, his return to the high levels of power in the communist nomenklatura, was based on "a career of ideologue, organizer, and censor." (Bosomitu) In the light of his activity at the History Institute and of his involvement in drafting the various volumes of the national history treatise, the monograph *History of Transylvania*, and in the publication of Marx's manuscripts about Romanian, the Politbureau decided to officially discuss his situation. On April 1964, one of the main points of a Politbureau meeting was "the way we can use comrade Miron Constantinescu in matters of history." Its members wanted to reach a conclusion on what is the best way in which he could "coordinate and control the historians' activity in relation to the party line." This new assignment opened the door even to rehabilitation: "How long a man must work well in order to rehabilitate himself? If he truly bettered himself from all points of view, then why not give him one of these positions?"¹⁵⁴

By no means was this type of trajectory unique. For example, in the Soviet Union, people such as Karl Radek, Evgenii Preobrazhenskii, Iurii Leonidovich Piatakov, or even Lev Borisovich Kamenev, after being stripped by their important positions in the party-state hierarchy in the late 1920s, will be employed, because of their knowledge of Marxist theory, in the writing of entries for the *Bol'shaia sovetskaia entsiklopediia*.¹⁵⁵ Of course, ultimately Constantinescu fared better than his Soviet counterparts, who were victims of the Great Terror. He was

¹⁵⁴ Ștefan Bosomitu, "Miron Constantinescu – Profilul intelectualului angajat", pp. 167-194 in *Intelectualii și regimul communist...*, pp. 186-187 and C. Cristescu, „1964: Biroul Politic ‘croiește’ istorie și istorici”, în *Magazinul istoric*, serie nouă, an XXXI, nr. 6 (363), iunie 1997. In 1968, Miron Constantinescu will again become member of the RPC's Central Committee, taking advantage of the succession in leadership.

¹⁵⁵ Brian Kassof, "A Book of Socialism Stalinist Culture...", *Ibidem*, p. 66 and p. 78.

rehabilitated during the party's turn toward increased 'socialist legality' and in the context of Ceaușescu's revigorated search for a synthesis between nationalism and Marxism-Leninism.

To return to the analysis of the first volume, I would like to touch upon to two other issues that are derivative from Constantinescu's remarks. The first is the striking resemblance between the prescription of the Slavs' role in the treatise and that proposed by C. C. Giurescu in continuation of I. Bogdan's initial formulation. According to Bogdan, a prominent member of the "critical school", "the influence of the Slav element in the formation of our nation is so evident that we may say without exaggeration that we cannot even speak of a Romanian people before the absorption of Slav elements by the native Roman population in the course of the sixth to tenth centuries."¹⁵⁶ To this Giurescu added the following corrective: "This claim must be understood as meaning that the Romanian people acquired its full composition, its complete ethnic characteristics, only after the Slav element had been added to the *essential* Daco-Roman element, which is the *foundation*."¹⁵⁷ In other words, both Giurescu and Constantinescu stressed in their interventions that the Dacian-Roman population and the Slavs were not "*equal* parts, either quantitatively or qualitatively, and the greater accent must still fall on the former of the two elements."¹⁵⁸ In conclusion, the return to a pre-communist definition of ethnogenesis was endorsed by the party, one year after the 1859 Centennial and in the same year as the IIIrd RWP Congress. The crystallization of regime individuality was accompanied by the entrenchment of tradition in the axiom about the nation's origin. Once a truth of such magnitude had been decided upon, it became part and parcel of the official regime ideology.

¹⁵⁶ Boia, *History and Myth...*, p. 107.

¹⁵⁷ *Idem*, p. 108

¹⁵⁸ *Idem*.

Another problem discussed by Constantinescu that generated heated debate among archeologists and historians was that of the geographical area for the formation of the Romanian people and language. Up to now, it is obvious that the Danube and the province of Dacia were the guiding geographical references. According to the draft Constantinescu quoted from, before the coming of the Slavs, “the provinces South of the Danube contributed more than those at the North in the process of the formation of the Romanian language and people.” But, at another section, the censor noticed a statement contradicting this thesis: “the presence of Romanian shepherds in the southern part of the Balkan Peninsula was not an old reality. This can be deduced also from the name used by Byzantines for them – Vlachs.” Constantinescu’s report concluded that “the roots of the Romanian people’s ethnogenesis were both North and South of the Danube. This river was a bridge that united the populations on its two banks. It was not a dividing line.” Despite the assimilation of the Thracian-Roman indigenes by Slav peoples, “the remnants of the Vlachs, shepherders and framers continued to exist on the peninsula up to the present day. North of the Danube the opposite process took place: the Dacian-Roman people assimilated the Slavs. We are certain that our historians, ethnographers, and linguists can explain the reasons for this phenomenon.”¹⁵⁹

The conclusion of this DPC report hinted to some of the debates among both archeologists and in the Commission for the Study of the Formation of the Romanian people and language. Some linguists such as Iorgu Iordan, Al. Rosetti, and E. Petrovici argued that the Romanian people had formed mostly south of the Danube and in south-western Romania. Their theses came in sharp conflict with statements by Daicoviciu, Nestor, Condurachi, and Pippiddi

¹⁵⁹ Constantiniu, *Ibidem*, f.4 and f. 11..

that the bulk of the Romanian ethnogenesis took place in the Roman province of Dacia.¹⁶⁰ At the same time, the linguists' theses came close to the immigrationist theory regarding the appearance of the Romanian people on Romania's contemporary territory, the main scholarly foe in the Romanian communist politics of archeology by the beginning of the sixties. The first volume of the treatise found an interesting set of solutions to this quarrel. It first presented the ethnogenesis as the result of the coming together of *all* populations deemed foundational for the Romanian people:

Contact was made across the great axis of the Danube, which united and not separated the populations on both of its banks. Because of this link with the South-Danubian Romanized people, the Dacian-Roman population from Dacia could maintain its specific being. Amidst newly arrived populations, it even enlarged its ranks with related ethnic groups, the free Dacians for instance, but with also elements splintered from the migratory groups. Coagulated in this fashion, the Dacian-Roman population entered a new historical phase, that of the cohabitation and symbiosis with the Slavs. This way the Romanian people was formed along with the classes of the feudal society.¹⁶¹

This interpretative framework, allowed the authors of the chapter "The formation of the Romanian language and people" to emphatically declare that "the hypothesis of the immigration of the Romanian people from the Balkan Peninsula is utterly absurd."¹⁶² The continuity of the Romanians was thus safeguarded by word of science. Moreover, the rejection of immigration did not mean a rebuke of the admigration thesis – the migration of Romanized groups across the south-north axis. The statement made in 1960 opened the door for the reconsideration of, first of all, D. Onciul, the main advocate of the admigration theory.¹⁶³ In the end though, both historians and party representatives reached the conclusion that "the Danube did not function as an ethnic border" (Daicoviciu) for the various elements that would make up the Romanians.

¹⁶⁰ In fact, Nestor and Daicoviciu developed a great rivalry; the latter even attempted to present Nestor's results as "Roeslerian". On the conflict between archeologists and some linguists see V.Dinu, "Referat privind consfătuirea Comisiei pentru studiul formării limbii și poporului român a Academiei RPR", 24 martie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no. 4/1962, ff. 26-29.

¹⁶¹ M. Macrea, „Populația daco-romană în Dacia după retragerea aureliană”, *Ibidem*, in p. 637

¹⁶² Daicoviciu, Petrovici, Ștefan, *Ibidem*, p. 777.

¹⁶³ Șt. Ștefănescu, „Concepția și metoda istorică a lui Dimitrie Onciul...”, *Ibidem*.

The continuity thesis was first and foremost sustained by means of unearthing “the creations of the local population and the general fund of material culture common to extensive areas during various periods of time.” This represented “the cultural-material heritage of the autochthonous people.”¹⁶⁴ Here is the point where the national mission of archeology would mostly surface. Not only that various archeological cultures allegedly showed beyond doubt that the Romanian people’s composite populations survived to merge for their final purpose. But, Romanian archeologists managed to find even a *Romanian* archeological culture – Dridu. The latter was initially limited to Muntenia, less present in Transylvania, but highly developed in Bulgaria. However, the archeologist who first maintained that it was a Romanian culture, I. Nestor, ended up in 1970 to characterize it as coinciding exactly with the Romania’s entire territory.¹⁶⁵ Already in 1964, Nestor contended that the Slavs were involved in this culture only to the extent of their assimilation to the Romanized population.¹⁶⁶ The significance of the Dridu archeological culture as *Romanian* did indeed serve two fundamental purposes: first, it ‘solved’ the problem of Romanian’s continuity, being a culture that situated between the eighth and ninth centuries, the same period for which, before 1945, there haven’t been archeological proofs of Romanian existence; second, it excluded the Slavs as primary influence on the material-cultural fund.

In order to conclude our analysis of the main theses regarding ‘the writing in’ of the Nation from the treatise’s first volume, one last point needs to be made. Despite adopting many

¹⁶⁴ *Idem*, p. 783.

¹⁶⁵ Nestor was strongly criticized for his views on the Dridu culture by C. Daicoviciu, who considered it as a Slav one, again making the distinction between Romanized Transylvania and the extra-Carpathian territory influenced by the Slavs.

¹⁶⁶ Alexandru Madgearu, “Cultura Dridu și evoluția poziției României în lagărul socialist”, paper presented at the 10th edition of the International Academic Conference *Culture and Civilization in South Eastern Europe*, Chișinău, April 13-16, 2006, <http://egg.mnir.ro/studii/Dridu/Dridu.htm>.

traditional interpretations regarding the subject of ethnogenesis, the collective of authors decided to criticize pre-communist findings by arguing that

The fundamental mistake of these [‘bourgeois’] theses was that their authors worked, *from the beginning*, with the notion and category “Romanian people,” regardless if they conceived it as formed on the territory of former Dacia, or if they brought it – already formed –, partly or in its entirety, from the South of the Danube and the Balkans. Bourgeois scholars did not take into account the two stages in the protracted process of the Romanian people’s ethnogenesis: a preliminary one, where we can speak only of a Romanized population; and the long stage of the process of formation of the Romanians as a people in itself.¹⁶⁷

L. Boia duly noted that this conclusion reflected the spirit of the treatise – a history of Romania as it was as a country in contemporary times. Identifying Romanian ethnogenesis South of Danube could have created problems with neighboring communist states. At the same time, this new reading corresponded to the opinions of C. Daicoviciu, who was fundamentally focused on proving that Transylvania had been the cradle of the Romanian people.¹⁶⁸ Overall, however, in terms of explaining and projecting the origins and the continuity of the Romanian people, the first volume reproduced many of the tenets of pre-communist history-writing. The emphasis placed on the antiquity of the Romanians on the basis of their component populations, the transhistorical link made between these populations and the contemporary socialist nation, and the focus on the originality and authenticity of the Romanian language and culture provided the foundation for an essentializing identitarian narrative.¹⁶⁹ E. Condurachi, one of the coordinators

¹⁶⁷ Daicoviciu, Petrovici, Ștefan, *Idem*, p. 776.

¹⁶⁸ L. Boia, *History and Myth...*, pp. 121-122.

¹⁶⁹ A DPC document from September 1959 announced the imminent meeting of historians to discuss the draft of the first volume. It was recommended that one or two Soviet historians be invited along with representatives from other communist countries (Hungary, Bulgarian, Czechoslovakia, Poland and the GDR). But Romanian historians were “in now way compelled to internalize the comments or observations of foreign historians”. The same year, another document brought the point home: chapters from the first volume had to be sent to historians from the USSR, Hungary, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, and Poland for comments. But the latter will be accepted by our historians only if they find them sound.” The RWP was therefore more interested in crystallizing a ‘scientific master-narrative about the origin of the Romanians than either in saving the feelings of their socialist comrades or in turning their year to possible neighborly complaints. See Pavel Țugui, „Informare privind lucrările la Tratatul de istorie a României”, 10 septembrie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.29/1959, f. 56 and „Referat cu privire la

of the first volume and head of the Bucharest Institute of Archeology, declared in 1963 that the formation of the Romanian people and language was “the natural completion” of “a millennial development”, “a process of ethnic and socio-economic transformation [...] based on the organic evolution of the Carpathian-Danubian region.”¹⁷⁰ The ethnogenesis was therefore the basis of a consciousness of ancient kinship (*neam*). Behind it, though, lay a nexus of presupposed primordial bonds that coalesced into an ethnic configuration.

4. Volume Two

The second volume of the treatise fundamentally relied on the interpretation of the maturation of feudalism in the Romanian territories. The latter was the result of the progress of internal forces of production that generated new relations of production upon which a specific, progressing superstructure (political, juridical, ideological) was built – the materialization of the ascendancy of a new hierarchy among social classes. I will not dwell much into the volume’s general analysis of feudalism. I am going to focus mainly on its implications upon conceptualizations of language, culture, and the state, because I consider them as vital in configuring this volume’s national narrative. F. Constantiniu interestingly remarked that the second volume conceptualization was the result of “a synthesis between P. P. Panaitescu’s economic materialism and Barbu Cămpina’s dialectical materialism.”¹⁷¹ As already discussed, Panaitescu pre-1945 approach on the Romanian Middle Ages greatly influenced Cămpina. Panaitescu’s influence in the historical field grew after 1958, incidentally the year when Cămpina

stadiul elaborării Tratatului de Istoria României”, 16 noiembrie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.4/1959, f. 95.

¹⁷⁰ Em. Condurachi, „Cercetarea istoriei străvechi și vechi a României în anii puterii populare”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, [1947-1962 Cercetarea Istoriei României în anii Puterii Populare] 6, an XV, 1962, p. 1366

¹⁷¹ The two writings of significance in this diagnosis are, according to Constantiniu, *Interpretări românești* (București: Editura Enciclopedică, 1994) and Cămpina’s „Evoluția economiei feudale” in *Scrisori istorice*, vol I, volum îngrijit de Damaschin Mioc și Eugen Stănescu (București: Editura Academiei RPR, 1973). Constantiniu, *De la Roller la Răutu...*, pp. 252-254.

died. However, Panaintescu did not succeed in having a strong direct impact on the second volume, despite his authorship of the subchapters on culture in Wallachia and Moldova from 14th to 16th centuries. But his reading of the feudal states (and for that matter of the “New School” historians) would still leave a mark on the volume.

The primary premise of the emergence of feudalism was that it took place on Romania’s territory under circumstances of the dominant presence of the Romanians *across the entire* area of the present day country. According to Cluj historian Ștefan Pascu, “narrative sources and archeological evidence testify that in various locations in Transylvania, Moldova, Muntenia, and Dobruja the existence of a predominant Romanian population as compared to other heterogeneous elements.”¹⁷² Political significance was attached to this situation, for, in early feudalism, local Romanian state-like formations were successfully able to maintain their autonomy in relation with the Byzantines, Hungarians, or Bulgarians, for they relied on trans-class solidarity. In this context, the victory of the Hungarian king in Transylvania would be later explained as the result of the combined national treason of the feudal Romanian warlords and the help provided to him by foreign populations.¹⁷³ In Wallachia (*Țara Românească*) and in Moldova, the feudal states appeared as a result of a combination of contradictions between domestic social classes and the weakening of Mongol rule because of “Russian people constant attacks against the Golden Horde”.¹⁷⁴ This approach was counterpoised to the ‘unscientific’ theories of the *descălecat* (the arrival of feudal lords from Transylvania) or the Genovese influence in the lower section of the Danube. These were direct attacks on pre-communist historians, especially Gh.

¹⁷² Șt. Pascu, „Structura social-economică”, in Andrei Oțetea et al., *Istoria României. Volum II...*, p. 48.

¹⁷³ Șt. Pascu și Șt. Ștefănescu, „Feudalismul timpuriu”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, [1947-1962 Cercetarea Istoriei României în anii Puterii Populare] 6, an XV, 1962, pp. 1452-1453..

¹⁷⁴ B. Cămpina, Șt. Pascu, Șt. Ștefănescu, „Formarea statelor feudale Țara Românească și Moldova”, in Andrei Oțetea et al., *Ibidem*, pp. 140-141.

Brătianu and C. C. Giurescu. Nevertheless, the conclusion of the respective chapter on the topic settled on explaining the emergence of *Țara Românească* and Moldova as results of the Romanians' independence struggle against Hungarian kings. Another means by which class-struggle analysis was framed in a national form was characterization of the role of Slavonic in the cultural development of the two feudal states. Despite its presence in early feudalism across all three provinces, it did not endanger their cultural unity (*unitatea de cultură*). Its negative impact consisted of "making more difficult the free expression of original thought and feeling (*exprimarea liberă a unei gândiri și simțiri originale*) and, more importantly, it was an obstacle for the diffusion of a written culture among the large masses [who were Romanian, n.a.] in the society."¹⁷⁵ Subsequently, Cămpina and Berza, the historians who wrote the respective chapter, limited themselves to talking of only a Slavo-Romanian culture up to the 14th century.¹⁷⁶

These characterizations of the Romanian history during early feudalism (IX-XIIIth centuries) were the groundwork for the general development of the Romanians in the following two centuries. The subsequent overall narrative was essentially ambivalent: on the one hand, it relied predominantly on class-struggle as a motif force of history; on the other hand, it was cut across by a recurrent *topos* of increasingly unitary defensive strivings for state consolidation and cultural enlightenment that re-enforced and deepened the Romanians' conciseness of kinship. The centralization and strengthening of Romanian medieval states in the context of the struggle against the neighboring great powers overlapped with "the beginning of a Romanian script and

¹⁷⁵ B. Cămpina și M. Berza, „Cultura în vremea feudalismului timpuriu”, *Idem.*, p. 183.

¹⁷⁶ A caveat is necessary here: during the discussions over the draft of the second volume two 'red specialists', P. Apostol and Gr. Oprescu, insisted that Lenin's theory of two cultures could be applied to other social-political formations than capitalism, but no clear-cut differentiation between a popular culture and the high culture of the exploiting classes should be made. This ambiguous stance appeared in the treatise volume, but more in guise of a Romanian culture surviving among the masses under circumstances of a non-existent or incipient (yet) Romanian script. See „Dezbaterile privind macheta vol II din Tratatul „Istoria României””, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 1, an XIV, 1961, pp. 163.

with the gradual replacement of Slavonic and Latin with the language of the people.” The latter was labeled as “the most significant cultural moment in the medieval (*medie*) history of Romania.”¹⁷⁷ A landmark period of prosperity and glory for the Romanian states was granted a correspondent cultural revival of domestic source. In line with the party directive that the history of the Romanian territories should be approached unitary, volume two presented the development of Romanian language and script as “a general Romanian cultural phenomenon” that was the result of “the simultaneous transformation of society in all three Romanian states.”¹⁷⁸ The authors went even further, as they gave a new facet to the originality of Romanian culture already circumscribed in the first volume. According to the preface of the second volume, “the originality of the Romanian feudal culture” was not influenced by “foreign influences, for it was intrinsically linked to the society’s evolution, to its necessities. Any influence was received and assimilated only as far as it corresponded to these [societal] requirements.”¹⁷⁹ The two ways in which cultural originality was defined in the first two volumes of the treatise indicated a latent anti-cosmopolitism rooted in the imperative of self-sufficiency and authenticity. Further discussion of this issue in the following two volumes will reveal that the turn to regime individuality found a counterpart in the history-production’s formulations of national specificities. The *topoi* of pride and exceptionalism proved fertile ground for quasi-autarchic stories of identity.

¹⁷⁷ P. P. Panaitescu, „Cultura în Molodova și Țara Românească în vremea feudalismului dezvoltat”, in Oțetea et al., *Ibidem*, p. 662. A similar point was made other authors such as Ștefănescu, Pascu, Oțetea, etc. Panaitescu’s position was criticized by a linguist (Al. Rosetti), historians of Transylvania (I. Crăciun), and a Byzantine studies specialist (Al. Elian). Nevertheless, this interpretation was adopted to the volume and later became orthodoxy in Romanian history-production. See “Dezbateri asupra problemelor culturii medievale din Țările Române”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 6, an XII, 1959, p. 135.

¹⁷⁸ *Idem*, p. 684

¹⁷⁹ “Prefață”, in Oțetea et al., *Ibidem*, p. xiii.

L. Boia excellently diagnosed the general approach adopted by the second volume of the treatise, which was soon to become a central myth of history-production under communism: “the absence of a medieval unity of national type, was to highlight the unifying factors (geographical, ethnic, cultural, or concerning various forms of political collaboration), which, having been accumulated over time by an organic evolution, would lead progressively to the modern nation.”¹⁸⁰ In other words, the volume’s discussion of “developed feudalism” advanced a national-materialist historical narrative of the Romanians. Moreover, this type of interpretation basically represented a generalization of tendencies already present in pre-communist historiography.

But feudalism could not be history without historical personalities. Or, to return to a famous quote attributed to Stalin during the discussions over a middle-school textbook, “Catherine is Catherine. History is History.” The second volume opened the flood gates for the “repopulation of the Pantheon” of Romanian history (Boia). Already the first one went to great pains to demonstrate that the Dacians successfully founded a centralized, developed state under two ancient kings, Burebista and Decebalus. But the latter were yet to receive national characteristics. In contrast, voievods such as Mircea the Old, Iancu of Hunedoara (Hunyadi János), Vlad the Impeller, Stephan the Great, Petru Rareș, Ioan-Vodă, and, most importantly, Michael the Brave would become beacons of the struggle for the maintenance of the independence of the Romanian territory. Of course, the fact that they were representatives of the ruling, exploiting classes factored in, but on the same par (the least) with their contribution to the centralization of their respective states and the anti-Ottoman resistance. These rulers stood

¹⁸⁰ Boia, *History and Myth...*, p. 136.

out because “they knew how to appeal to the combative force and to the patriotism of the people.” Overall, the entire period of “developed feudalism” was split in two periods:

before their subjugation by the Ottoman Empire, the Romanian states fought to defend their independence against a foreign invader. They did it in the framework of organized forces of the state, under the leadership of a kingship and of its officials. In the second period, the Romanian territories revolt in order to regain their lost independence, masterminding a struggle that only seldomly becomes an all out war based on political and military means organized by state.¹⁸¹

Furthermore, this permanent struggle for independence represented a catalyst for the entrenchment of a consciousness of kinship (*neam*), “a prelude to the future national consciousness.” E. Stănescu, editor in chief of *Studii* between 1959 and 1963, argued in the subchapter “The Development of Consciousness of Kinship”, that “in order to maintain their own being (*fîința proprie*), these peoples [in Eastern Europe, n.a.] had to lead a continuous struggle...The peoples under the yoke of the Hapsburg and Ottoman empires were threatened with extinction by de-nationalization. That is why, along the great social movements, the fourteenth century was also dominated by subject peoples against foreign domination.”¹⁸²

Another crucial facet of this struggle for independence was that it increasingly became a coordinated effort. The symbol of the first attempts of a unification of forces in the Romanians’ struggle for independence was Iancu of Hunedoara. This was indeed an interesting choice, considering that this historical character had been for a long time symbolically fought over by both Romanians and Hungarians. According to C. Mureșan, a historian based in Cluj, dean of the History Department (1968-1976), a former student of S. Dragomir, stated that Iancu of Hunedoara was “the first ruler who, in order to fend off the Ottoman danger, tried to create a

¹⁸¹ M. Berza, N. Stoicescu și L. Marcu, „Organizarea statului feudal”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, [1947-1962 Cercetarea Istoriei României în anii Puterii Populare] 6, an XV, 1962, p. 1488.

¹⁸² E. Stănescu, „Lupta împotriva dominației străine. Dezvoltarea conștiinței de neam”, in Oțetea et al., *Ibidem*, pp. 770-772.

political system based on tightening of the links between the three Romanian countries on the basis of their economic exchanges and defensive interests against the Turks.”¹⁸³ Only two years later, another historians from Cluj, Fr. Pall, published an article in *Studii* that reinforced the point made by Mureșan in the treatise. Pall argued that despite obvious feudal interests, Iancu de Hunedoara’s actions were based upon “the very goal of his entire life: the struggle against Turkish conquest. In this context should one interpret his interventions in the internal affairs of Țara Românească and Moldova. His actions were inspired by deeper reasons, by the objective situation created by the danger of Ottoman expansion, by this very backward form of feudalism as compared to the more developed feudal relations that existed at the time in European countries.”¹⁸⁴ No direct ethnic marker was placed on the ruler’s activity, but he was a symbol of solidarity in the struggle for independence of the three Romanian countries. And, the latter phenomenon was tied to the entrenchment of kinship. No wonder that Berza and two other historians would conclude in 1963 that that the treatise’s analysis of Iancu de Hunedoara proved that he had been “the great leader of the resistance of the entire Romanian people.”¹⁸⁵

Nevertheless, Iancu of Hunedoara, along with Mircea the Old, Vlad the Impeller, and Stephan the Great were actors in a budding narrative of national pride. According to the second volume, their actions as leaders of the people basically put the Romanians on the map of Europe: “the long anti-Ottoman war ensured for the Romanian people, through their sacrifices and courage, a seat of honor among Europe’s peoples, making them known and famous from East to West. These battles also created a strong tradition of struggle for freedom among the masses,

¹⁸³ C. Mureșan, „Consolidarea voievodatului Transilvaniei și lupta antiotomană a țărilor române sub conducerea lui Iancu de Hunedoara”, *Ibidem*, p. 446.

¹⁸⁴ Fr. Pall, „Intervenția lui Iancu de Hunedoara în Țara Românească și Moldova în anii 1447-1448”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 5, an XVI, 1963, p. 1085.

¹⁸⁵ Berza, Stoicescu, Marcu, „Organizarea statului feudal”, *Ibidem*.

which they will never lose despite the debility of the ruling classes.”¹⁸⁶ This statement reveals a central element of the historical narrative substantiating socialist patriotism under Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej: pride was fueled by the glory of the national struggle for independence, not by an exaltation based on the evolution of the Romanian state(s) throughout history. This is the fundamental departure point of the *Tratat de istorie a României* in relation to pre-communist historiography. First, the state was the product of class antagonisms. Second, the permanence of a centralized state in the Romanian territories was rejected. Third, both the rise and demise of the centralized medieval states were different results of the pressures of feudal attrition. In a sense, the second volume, by means of class analysis succeeded, to a certain extent, in debunking the myth of strong centralized states on Romanian territory during the Middle Ages. And for a short while this approach mainly inspired by B Cămpina fit the bill with the RWP for its identitarian narrative was based on the people’s tradition of will for socio-national freedom.¹⁸⁷ At the same time, by emphasizing the role of rulers in the struggle for independence and the solidarity of kinship in these emancipating struggles, the authors of the second volume let the door open to further reconsideration of state’s role during feudalism.

The ambivalence in the treatment of the state was most obvious in the second volume’s evaluation of Michel the Brave rule and of his unification of the Romanian territories. E. Stănescu, the author the chapter on the voievod, pointed to the latter’s contradictory personality:

the feudal boyar, avid invader of peasant lands, before and during his rule”; “the *domn*, holder of supreme power in the feudal state, who had to defend the general interests of the dominant class even though that meant defying the boyars’ the individual or group interests.”; and, “the impressive range of his plans and dreams of greatness and the effective possibilities for their achievements.

¹⁸⁶ B. Cămpina și M. Berza, „Sirșitul lui Ștefan cel Mare. Personalitatea sa”, in Oțetea et al., *Ibidem*, pp. 549-550.

¹⁸⁷ For example Gh. Zane was criticized during the debates of the volume’s draft for permanently indentifying the state with the people. See „Dezbaterile privind macheta vol II...”, *Ibidem*, p. 162.

The historian argued that Michael the Brave was conscious of his role to “unite politically all territories freed from Ottoman domination, to found upon them a strong, unitary state...[he] was not only a great general but also a thinker and political practitioner at par with his epoch.”¹⁸⁸

Moreover, his war of liberation from Ottoman rule laid at the

origin of the most important phenomenon of social consciousness from the seventeenth century – the transformation of the Romanian people’s consciousness of unity of kin and language into a militant and active idea that will dominate the activity of the chroniclers from the end of the 17th and the beginning of the 18th centuries. The ideas of the Romanians’ unity, of the historical necessity for liberation from the Turkish yoke, and that of regaining independence were born from this common struggle, which never before had Romanians undertaken it together against foreign rule.

In other words, Michael the Brave’s unified state, despite being the expression of the ruling classes, it was also a fundamental landmark on the historical path of the Romanians’ national emancipation. It had given “a tremendous impulse to the development of the consciousness of kinship, it made possible its generalization in the entire Romanian society and therefore it metamorphosed it into a great idea.”¹⁸⁹

Stănescu’s characterization of Michael the Brave and of his unification was by no means original at the time. It seems that the one who first formulated this interpretation was P. P. Panaitescu. During the January 23rd meeting of the Academy’s Institute of History in Bucharest for the 1859 Centennial, Panaitescu declared that

There have been actions that preceded the idea of political unity. In the 19th century it was considered that the union of the three Romanian states by Michel the Brave was a fact. In reality, [his] unification was made because of feudal motives. It was not of the Romanian people. It was the great big bloc against foreign enemies...It did not led to [real] unity, but it awakened popular feeling for unification.¹⁹⁰

A year later, after his presentation was published in the anniversary volume of the Centennial, the thesis was more clearly formulated: Michel the Brave’s unification had symbolic power for it

¹⁸⁸ E. Stănescu, “Personalitatea lui Mihai Viteazul”, Oțetea et al., *Ibidem*, pp. 1014-1015.

¹⁸⁹ *Idem*, p. 1016.

¹⁹⁰ „Sesiunea Institutului de Istorie al Academiei RPR din București (23 ianuarie)”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 1, an XII, 1959, p. 309.

“allowed the explosion of popular feelings of solidarity, revealing a permanent reality.”¹⁹¹ In 1962, in the issue of *Studii* celebrating 15 years of Marxist-Leninist history-production, Stănescu stressed again the principle that “the people’s consciousness of unity of kin and language had sometimes materialized in political and military actions based on kingship (*domnie*) founded on a large popular basis, such as those of Michael the Brave.”¹⁹² By then, Panaitescu’s thesis¹⁹³ had become the official interpretation of this historical event. Of course, this reading will soon be greatly expanded under Ceaușescu, when the voievod’s rule became one of the golden moments of the Romanian nation.¹⁹⁴

What is significant here is that on the one hand, a historian, with hardly any communist credentials, managed to leave a fundamental imprint on the ‘scientific analysis’ of such an important moment in the national history. On the other hand, even his understanding of the phenomenon was very similar to that of another pre-1945 historian, Ioan Lupaș, one of those who had emphatically expounded the “national mission” of the field.¹⁹⁵ According to the Lupaș, “when the three Romanian lands, Muntenia, Transylvania, and Moldavia, came together under the political scepter of Michael the Brave, it was precisely the lack of this [national] consciousness which was the chief reason for the short duration of this Romanian rule.” However, he did claim that “the seed of the national idea was not lacking from Michael’s acts of

¹⁹¹ Panaitescu *apud* Cornelia C. Bodea și Gr. Chiriță, „Formarea statului național”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, [1947-1962 Cercetarea Istoriei României în anii Puterii Populare] 6, an XV, 1962, pp. 1599.

¹⁹² Daicoviciu și Stănescu, „Probleme principale ale cercetării istoriei...”, *Ibidem*, p. xcvi

¹⁹³ Panaitescu was basically tweaking his pre-1945 interpretation of Michael the Brave. At the time, he found himself caught between his critical reading and his political instrumentalization of the voievod’s historical role. See Boia, *History and Myth...*, pp. 60-61.

¹⁹⁴ Monika Barr correctly pointed out that the first to introduce this reading was M. Kogălniceanu, see Barr, *Historians and Nationalism...*, p. 17.

¹⁹⁵ A possible source for Lupaș’ influence after rehabilitation might have also been the fact that, according to the memoirs of Apostol Stan, A. Oțetea owed his first breakthrough in the historians’ community to him. Lupaș recommended Oțetea for a scholarship in Paris, where Oțetea ultimately took his doctorate. See Apostol Stan, *Istorie și politică...*, p.121.

rule.”¹⁹⁶ Moreover, similarly to Stănescu’s characterization of the voievod’s ambitions, Ghe. Brătianu considered that they “obliged the prince to overcome particularist traditions and to take into consideration, from an as yet exclusively strategic or political point of view, a greater unity, which could not fail to become national once the times permitted.”¹⁹⁷

The importance of the reading of Michael the Brave’s unification, as it appears in the treatise and in the first half of the sixties, laid in the fact that it implicitly put a stress on the role of national consciousness and solidarity for the viability of a unified, independent nation-state. Even party ideologues indicated the necessity for a ‘thicker description’ of this moment in national history. M. Constantinescu in a report addressed to Ghe. Dej about the first volume of *Istoria Transilvaniei* (coordinated by C. Daicoviciu) made the following statement: “in what concerns Michael the Brave’s great accomplishment, the causes for the inability to build a Romanian feudal centralized state must be analyzed more profoundly. Inadequate economic development was of course the main cause, but the historical context must be truly understood as well.”¹⁹⁸ Again, the treatise provided the response to Constantinescu’s demands:

the failure was caused primary by the historical stage at which the development of relations between the Romanian states were. The progressive strengthening of the connections between them – economic, political, and cultural – during the 15th and 16th centuries especially after the establishment of Ottoman domination, made possible their unification between 1599 and 1600. At the end of the 16th century one can notice that economic relations lagged behind political and cultural ones. An absolutely necessary condition for inter-state centralization [...] would have been exactly the existence of a beginning of common internal market. [...] The action of unification took place with such a great strength that any aggressive action [against it] could take place only after the first signs of internal disaggregation.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁶ Both Constantiniu, *De la Roller la Răutu...*, p.255 and Boia, *History and Myth...*, p. 136 remarked this resemblance of approaches.

¹⁹⁷ Boia, *Ibidem*, p. 137.

¹⁹⁸ Miron Constantinescu, „Observații la ‚Istoria Transilvaniei’.” Raport adresat lui Gheroghiu Dej înspre aprobare, 10 februarie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.7/1960, f.2.

¹⁹⁹ E. Stănescu, “Cauzele eșuării unirii politice a țărilor române”, in Oțetea et al., *Ibidem*, pp. 990-991 and p. 999.

Two crucial issues need to be pointed out in this explanation: first, one can see the influence of Stalin's principle that sometimes ideas can accelerate historical development; that the superstructure can act upon the basis. And second, national unity was also associated with a coherent internal economy. But ultimately, the unification failed because of the incompleteness of national consciousness at the specific historical stage of its realization. An additional element appeared as well: the opposition of the great powers surrounding the Romanian states, for "the consolidation in the Carpathian-Danubian region of a strong, centralized state was against their interests."²⁰⁰ The myth of "Romania as borderland of Europe"²⁰¹ was only in its incipient revival phase; under communism it will regain its pre-1945 preeminence only with C. C. Giurescu's ascension to the status of official state historian. The last remark I wish to make here is that the explanation for the failure of the 1600 unification based on the incompleteness of national consciousness resembled that of Iorga's, though the latter excluded class conflict. According to the doyen of Romanian historiography, the breakdown of Michael the Brave's unitary state happened because of "the disappearance of social solidarity, the disappearance of the unity of consciousness of the Romanian people."²⁰² From a different angle, the treatise argued on a similar direction: any solidarity that generated the mass support for the voievod rapidly disappeared because of internal disaggregation, as the ruling class betrayed their consciousness of kinship.

To conclude my analysis of the second volume, I consider that this part of the treatise, despite its strong historical materialist approach, did bring forth three topics fundamental for the master-narrative that was coming into its own at the beginning of the sixties: cultural

²⁰⁰ *Idem*, p. 993.

²⁰¹ Lucian Boia, *Romania: Borderland of Europe* (London: Reaktion Books, 2001).

²⁰² Boia, *History and Myth...*, p. 61.

enlightenment and national struggle as catalysts for the transition from a consciousness of kin to that of a nation.²⁰³ The third was the role of historical personalities, their significance in the historical destiny of the Romanian people. The volume set the ground for the interpretation of these ‘exceptional’ individuals, who could transcend their class limitation, as true models toward whom the new leadership could relate. Their newly regained national role would allow the RWP to situate them ‘organically’ as forefathers of the present fulfillment of the national mission in the communist polity. Moreover, these forerunners’ ability to bring together the people into united action for liberation and independence generated the foundation of national pride, for their actions had introduced the Romanians to the entire Europe. The motifs developed by this volume of the treatise weaved in with first one’s *topoi* of timelessness, continuity and originality and officialized the rehabilitation in history-production under communism of one fundamental myth of Romanian history – that of unity. To put it differently, the Romanians discovered how to mobilize politically and how to emancipate culturally on the basis of their identity of kin, which subsequently was on fast track to becoming national.

5. Volume Three

The third volume of *Tratatul de istorie a României* was the result of the negotiations between historians and the party. Initially, only one volume should have covered the entire period from the appearance of feudalism to its unraveling by the second half of the 19th century. However, in 1957, A. Oțetea and D. Prodan intervened with the DPC, convincing the decision-

²⁰³ R. Daskalov identified in Bulgarian historiography under communism, in the second half of the sixties, theoretizations of national consciousness similar to that that emerged from the second and third volumes of the *Tratat de istorie a României*. For example, according to him, Romyana Radkova considered that the “structure” of the national self-consciousness was “a mixture of heterogeneous (and some quite curious) components, such as the awareness of belonging to a certain ethnic community; attachment to the “national values” of territory, language, and culture; a feeling of patriotism; solidarity in national-liberation (and anti-feudal) struggles; and an awareness of belonging to a nation-state.” Roumen Daskalov, *The Making of a Nation...*, p. 20.

makers to create two tomes and adopt a five-volume structure.²⁰⁴ This outcome indicated an adjustment of the Marxist-Leninist principle of periodization based on socio-political formations. The time-frame of the third volume (i.e., second tome of volume two) indicated a synthesis between the general ideological label of “developed feudalism” and the characterization of the period as pre-(or even early) modern. Two crucial historical phenomena were discussed for the period in question: the gradual appearance of capitalist relations along with the rise of the bourgeoisie, and the appearance of national consciousness as the foundation of a national ideology focused on Romanian unity in a nation-state. This thesis was straightforwardly formulated in the preface: “the development of capitalist relations created and strengthened national culture as an ideological weapon for social transformation and for the fulfillment of the Unification and of national independence.”²⁰⁵ Moreover, a principle that had been employed in the previous two volumes, was underscored now to an even greater extent: “the unitary character of the Romanian people’s historical development... The permanent ties – economic, political, and cultural – the historical community of the three Romanian states.”²⁰⁶

As we have seen earlier, this imperative of unitary national history had been decided by the party as early as 1956. At the same time, such axiom reflected pre-communist preoccupations of the epistemic community. For example, in 1937, I. Lupaș advocated “the full integration of the Transylvanian past in the national history.”²⁰⁷ Indeed, starting with late fifties and early sixties, the writing of national history with Transylvania in became for the first time a methodological given. No wonder that in his memoirs the head of the DPC’s Section for Science and Culture, P. Țugui, would proudly declare that the two volumes (and editions) of *History of*

²⁰⁴ Pavel Țugui, *Istoria și limba română...*, p. 135.

²⁰⁵ “Prefață”, A. Oțetea, D. Prodan și M. Berza et al., *Istoria României. Volum III...*, p. viii.

²⁰⁶ *Idem*, p. xv.

²⁰⁷ Boia, *History and Myth...*, p. 135.

Transylvania were the first such monograph exclusively dedicated to this province.²⁰⁸ Or, as M. Constantinescu declared in the report he coordinated over the first volume of this monograph: “it is only correct to approach Transylvania’s history as part and parcel of the history of the Romanian states in indissoluble bond with Muntenia and Moldova.” He went even further for he complained that the collective of authors “did not provide a clear demarcation line for the point where the history of Hungary ends and where the history of Transylvania begins.”²⁰⁹ The RWP Plenum of November 30-December 4, 1961 revealed the deep concern of the communist leaders regarding their legitimacy as re-unifiers of Romania. Accordingly, history-production took on the task of separating historiographically Transylvania from Hungary. Considering the tendencies manifested by the end of the 1930s and the activity of bodies such as the Center of Transylvanian Studies in the 1940s (or even of M. Antonescu’s Ministry of Propaganda)²¹⁰, the RWP decision would be met with sympathy by most historians.

Returning to the third volume of the treatise, the collective of authors decided to write the history the three states *as if* they had been united. An essentially culturally nationalist presupposition was embedded in this central thesis of history-production under communism at the beginning of the sixties. During the period of time in question (17th century to mid 19th century) the state was rather an accidental phenomenon, because the economic, social, and political conditions for it to become a nation-state were not ripe yet. To paraphrase Hutchinson, the essence of the Nation lay in its distinctive civilization, which was “the product of its unique history, culture and geographical profile.” The third volume, continuing a line hinted at in the second one, emphasized the rise of “a historical vernacular culture” upon which the people were

²⁰⁸ Ţuguî, *ibidem*, p. 108.

²⁰⁹ Constantinescu, „Observații la „Istoria Transilvaniei”...”, *Ibidem*, f. 2 and ff. 13-14.

²¹⁰ For example, see Mioara Anton, *Propaganda și Război* and Sorin Șipoș, *Silviu Dragomir*.

mobilized into a national awakening that created the unified nation-state.²¹¹ For example, M

Berza listed the following accomplishments of the Romanian old culture during the 17th century:

the triumph of Romanian as a language of culture; the creation of a unitary means of communication for all the three Romanian states through the great works of the century; the establishment of print culture and of superior education institutions; the widening of public interest for historical literature and fiction; and, the discussion of the Romanian people's origin and ethnic unity.²¹²

D. Prodan described along the same line the 18th century cultural revival in Transylvania: “the awakening of national consciousness – searching in the past on the basis of the ideals of the future. The past revealed to the Romanian people not only its Roman origins, but the existence of a state of its own encompassing the entire Romanian territory – Dacia.”²¹³ The gradual accumulation of national palingenesis via culture reached its apex in the first half of the 19th century. At the time, according to A. Oțetea,

writers did not limit themselves anymore to merely ascertaining a community of origin and language in the three Romanian states. They molded this unity into a weapon for bringing together the scattered branches of the Romanian people into one trunk in order to found the Romanian nation within the borders of a nation-state, which they called, because of propagandistic reasons, Dacia.²¹⁴

Indeed, the treatise stated that “the nation was a historical category developed during the period of transition from feudalism to capitalism.” But this “inevitable product of the capitalist era of social development”²¹⁵ was founded on a unitary ethno-cultural ascription²¹⁶ that had gained socio-political significance by vernacular mobilization. In this sense, I consider correct A.

²¹¹ Hutchinson, John *The Dynamics of Cultural Nationalism: The Gaelic Revival and the Creation of the Irish Nation State* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1987), pp. 12-13. Also see, John Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith, *Nationalism*.

²¹² M. Berza, „Cultura românească în Țara Românească și Moldova în secolul al XVII-lea”, in Oțetea, Prodan, Berza (coord.), *Ibidem*, p. 525.

²¹³ D. Prodan, „Caracterul regimului austriac în Transilvania”, in Oțetea, Prodan, Berza, *Ibidem*, p. 355.

²¹⁴ A. Oțetea, „Formarea națiunii burgheze române”, *Ibidem*, p. 594.

²¹⁵ *Idem*, p. 591.

²¹⁶ According to Fredrik Barth, “ethnic ascription” is the classification of an individual in terms of his basic, most general identity, presumptively determined by his origin and background. See in Anthony D. Smith, *Nationalism and Modernism: A Critical Survey of Recent Theories of Nations and Nationalism* (London: Routledge, 1998), p. 182.

Mihalache's observation that the third volume instituted a form "fragmented determinism."²¹⁷ The economic factor was relativized, for progress was dependent on cultural emancipation. In this manner, social and political liberation would necessary mean national freedom. However, the third volume only accentuated a phenomenon that had also been present in the interpretations of the previous two. The increased role allocated to culture in the historiographical effort of this volume's collective of authors did not pass unnoticed by censors. During the discussion of the draft in 1961, P. Constantinescu-Iași manifested his displeasure with the fact that "the three chapters on culture represent almost 18 percent of the entire volume." Such proportion came in conflict with established practices from "volumes second and four, in which the history of culture does not represent more than 12 percent of the entire work."²¹⁸ Interestingly enough, Constantinescu-Iași's remark was ignored, for the chapters on cultural history maintained their initial size. My rough calculations situate them at an even greater length, around 20 percent.

In the rest of the paragraphs that I wish to allocate to this volume of the treatise, I will again focus mainly on the manner in which various historians gave a national coloring to their analyses. Many of the authors who have briefly discussed this part of the *Tratat* tended to look mostly at the debates on "the second serfdom", "feudal annuity", or "the nature of the aristocratic system", or "Phanariot rule over the Principalities".²¹⁹ I chose to discuss more along the lines

²¹⁷ Andi Mihalache, "Iluminismul transilvan în istoriografia perioadei 1948-1965", *Annales Universitatis Apulensis, Series Historica*, 4-5/2000-2001, pp. 200-201.

²¹⁸ "Sesiunea consacrată dezbaterii machetei volumului III", *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 1, an XV, 1962, p. 177.

²¹⁹ Constantiniu, *De la Roller la Răutu...*, p. 258-267, A. Mihalache, *Istorie și practici...*, pp. 165-166, Apostol Stan, *Istorie și Politică...*, pp. 179-183. Of the themes listed the most important one was „the second serfdom.” A Oțetea tried to introduce in the treatise this thesis since the first discussions in late 1956 and 1957. But, as the debates that were published in *Studii* show, he ran into the opposition of both some of his fellow-historians and of the party representatives. On the one hand, historians such as D. Prodan or I. Corfuz outward rejected Oțetea's thesis stating that the historical phenomenon he was talking about simply did not exist in the history of late feudalism in Romania. On the other hand, Oțetea was rebuked by party representatives because his theory contradicted the teleology of historical development purported by historical materialism. The second serfdom suggested a recurrence of a type of economic relations that should have been overcome during the time period discussed by Oțetea (first 1764-1821, then up until 1830s and 1840s). On the other hand, Oțetea's considerations were perceived to play into the

that I have developed already in reference to the previous volumes. Therefore I am going to focus on the manner in which the socio-political investigation by the collective of historians would be associated with narratives of national awakening and liberation.

In 1962, the issue of *Studii* that celebrated 15 years of history-production under communism contained also an article “The Medieval Culture”. Two trajectories of interpretations are set up: first, the Leninist principle of two cultures’ second, within the field of the so-called culture of the ruling class, the literature of the chronicles of the 18th century as emancipatory culture. Relying mainly on the pronouncements of the treatise’s third volume, the authors go as far as declaring, rather contradictory, that “the Romanian chronicles come second only to the Russian ones and they are unparallel in Europe.” Then the article appeals to one of the established critics in communist Romania, member of the Academy, D Panaitescu-Perpessicius, who was quoted for a complete characterization of the relevance and role of print culture (despite its class character) in the 18th century: “the transformation of the unity of kinship and language into a political idea or the morphing of the man of the Middle Ages into the man of the modern world.”²²⁰ As already hinted at, this last thesis was central in the general approach of the treatise third volume. In his chapter about culture in the 17th century, M. Berza stressed the fact that

the chroniclers, despite their class interests, managed to understand the wider interests of the country, at least in the form of the necessity for the country’s independence. That is why so many chronicle pages vibrate with patriotism, giving them the superior meaning of the consciousness of a freedom that needed be regained. In this consisted the chroniclers’ role in

Camecom discussion of the historical inherent tradition of an economy based on agriculture and into the geo-economic segregation envisaged by Khrushchev. In conclusion, Oțetea’s “second serfdom” was rejected during the discussions of the third volume both on epistemic and political grounds.

²²⁰ Dan Simionescu și Corina Nicolescu, „Cultura medievală” in *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, [1947-1962 Cercetarea Istoriei României în anii Puterii Populare] 6, an XV, 1962, p. 1510. Dan Simionescu was a literary historian who received his doctorate in 1938 and who was considered one of the followers of the famous Romanian folklorist Constantin Rădulescu-Codin. Simionescu and his colleague begin their article by praising Xenopol, Iorga, and N. Cartoian’s contribution at the study of medieval culture, generally speaking, and of popular culture in particular. The last predecessor in the list was none other than Simionescu’s doctorate coordinator.

the ideological preparation for the struggle of unification and liberation during the 19th century.²²¹

The third volume of the treatise placed the Romanians' cultural revival at the core of the struggle for socio-political emancipation, into the unraveling of "developed feudalism" during the 18th and early 19th century. The respective historians performed this thematic graft by emphasizing the thought and writings of those individuals who created a vernacular framework for the affirmation "of the glorious origin of the Romanian people" (Simionescu). In this fashion, civic dignity was inextricably linked to the consciousness of the past. Or, as one of the chroniclers is quoted in the volume: "Search thyself dear reader as in a mirror and see where you hail from." (M. Costin)

The connection established by the authors of the third volume between socio-political enfranchisement and national palingenesis was most obvious in the analysis of the role of Inochentie Micu, of *Supplex Libellus Valachorum*, and of the Transylvanian School (*Școala Ardeleană*). D. Prodan's sections on the importance of the thought of the Romanian Greek-Catholic bishop reveal how culture and history fuelled the transition from a conception of the nation as socio-economic category to a political one. The espousal of ancientness, Romanity, and continuity thus transcend their mere historical quality, as "they nurtured the Romanian people's self-consciousness, becoming weapons for political arising." In this context, Prodan continued, the Romanian nation had to be present into public life and not solely as an abstract category but "as the entire people."²²² Moreover, the Romanians' historical, cultural, and political rebirth (this is the succession adopted by the historian) could be achieved only by means of education. In this

²²¹ Berza, "Cultura românească...", *Ibidem*, p. 283. For a similar reading of the 17th century chroniclers see D. Simionescu's review of Miron Constin *Opere*, Ediție critică cu un studiu introductiv, note, comentarii, variante, indice și glosar de P. P. Panaitescu, București, ESPLA 1958 in *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 4, an XIII, 1960. pp. 209-214.

²²² D. Prodan, „Lupta lui Inochentie Micu pentru ridicarea politică a românilor”, in Oțetea, Prodan, Berza et al., *Ibidem*, p. 496.

manner, a new stratum would develop: “a leading, self-conscious group with the necessary material and cultural basis, capable to become the representatives of a nation and which had to be constantly enlarged.”²²³ D. Prodan was using a concept of relative novelty at the time of the writing of the third volume. This concept was most clearly formulated in 1962 by Daicoviciu and Stănescu in their programmatic article:

[our] research [on feudalism] could not be satisfied with the simple and schematic image of a social pyramid; it underscored the existence of two fundamental specificities: on the one hand, the heterogeneous character of the main classes, made up of social strata with divergent interests, if not altogether contradictory; and, on the other hand, the existence of intermediary strata, which were united temporarily by their instable place in between the main classes. The latter stood in reserve for the former, but they also tried, without success throughout the whole Middle Ages, to form a class in itself.²²⁴

The fundamental concept of intermediary social strata combined with the principle of ‘exemplary’ individuals able to transcend their class interests for those of the people (i.e., Nation) allowed for an extensive re-consideration of historical personalities and their role in national history. These individuals, who sometimes defied class determination were those that, to paraphrase Prodan, defined not only the economic, but also political and cultural role that the Romanian people were due in the life of the country. They were those aware of the Romanian people’s direction of development. It is clear by now that the national history treatise not only presented the forerunners of social-economic emancipation, but it also re-introduced the category of pioneers of the national cause. More often than not they were one and the same person.

Later in the third volume, in his discussion of the nature and significance of the *Supplex Libellus Vallachorum*, Prodan drove his point home. The initiators of this program of emancipation were those who represented the interest of the people. They were the Romanian national intelligentsia (*intelectuali naționalî romîni*). They formed “a mixed stratum still too

²²³ *Idem*, p. 508.

²²⁴ Daicoviciu și Stănescu, „Probleme principale...”, p. lxxxix.

undifferentiated and undefined to constitute a class. It combined ‘aristocratic’ and ‘bourgeois’ elements. Their program of struggle also amalgamated ‘feudal’ and ‘bourgeois-democratic’ aspirations, quantitative and qualitative elements, traditional and progressive.”²²⁵ Under the circumstances, the socio-economic basis enlarged at the same time with cultural development in a context of tightening bonds between the three Romanian states. In this manner, “the sphere of political concepts is expanded with that of the nation. This will be the premise for further action. The consciousness of unity increased, becoming the premise of future political unity.” Prodan concluded by stating that “the socio-political struggle that was momentarily repressed [end of 18th century, n.a.] will only re-ignite later at a greater magnitude.”²²⁶ With this interpretative framework in mind, it was not surprising that during the discussions over the draft of the third volume, historians would call for a more thorough and complex presentation of the Transylvanian School (those who re-affirmed the Roman origin of the Romanian people), which was considered “a crucial phenomenon of Romanian cultural history.”²²⁷

In re-introducing the category of national intelligentsia as fundamental actor for historical development in the 18th and 19th centuries, the third volume was basically preparing the ground for the configuration of the nation’s role in Romanian modern history. This new social stratum also had a program that not only transgressed class limitations, but it characterized the entire territory of Romania as well. This is what historians at the end of the fifties and beginning of the sixties called “national ideology”. The latter was founded on “the examination of the Romanian people’s origins; on the emphasis on its glorious moments during the rule of voievods who fought for the country’s rights and against foreign invasion; and on the capitalization of old

²²⁵ D. Prodan, „Situția politică în Transilvania până la 1821. Luptele politice din 1790-1792. Supplex Libellus Vallchorum” in Oțetea, Prodan, Berza et al., *Ibidem*, p. 831.

²²⁶ *Idem*, p. 846

²²⁷ “Sesiunea consacrată dezbaterii machetei volumului III”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 1, an XV, 1962, pp. 177-185.

Romanian culture.” But the national intelligentsia did not limit itself to cultural rebirth: “interest for the motherland’s past did not hamper their attention to contemporary realities. The correct interpretation of and possible solutions for the present were sought after by means of the lessons that history could provide.”²²⁸ In other words, to use B. Anderson coinage, national ideology at the beginning of the 19th century represented “a secular transformation of fatality into continuity, contingency into meaning.”²²⁹ The treatise configured and legitimized Romanian Romantic nationalism giving it a central role in the Romanian states’ transition into modernity.

Two important historical movements confirmed the fusion of the struggle for social change with the national cause: the peasant revolt of 1784 led by Horea, Cloșca and Crișan (in Transylvania) and Tudor Vladimirescu’s uprising in 1821 (in Wallachia). Under communism, both events had gone through of process of being solely perceived from a social point of view to having a national facet added to them. The 1955-1957 debate between Solomon Știrbu and A. Oțetea regarding the 1821 movement was mainly centered on the former’s interpretation from the standpoint of class struggle and based on a projection of contemporary international politics into early 19th, and the latter’s understanding of Vladimirescu’s actions as both socially and nationally motivated.²³⁰ By 1960, this rather contentious subject was settled. The thematic discussion on the subject published in *Studii* reached a conclusion that will then be the central thesis of the respective chapter in the treatise’s third volume:

the rebellion led by Tudor Vladimirescu was a general social and national insurrection in which all social strata interested in the abolition of feudalism participated. [...] It did not

²²⁸ Al. Elian, et al. „Dezvoltarea cultural în perioada destrămării feudalismului”, Oțetea, Prodan, Berza et al., *Ibidem*, p. 1090. Al. Elian was supposed to write most of this last chapter on cultural development at the end of feudalism with P. P. Panaitescu. A DPC document mentions though that Panaitescu refused to continue writing for this section of the volume. The reasons were not specified. See „Referat cu privire la stadiul muncii de elaborare a tratatului de istorie a României”, 3 aprilie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no. 12/1959, f. 124.

²²⁹ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, (New York: Verso, 1991), p. 11.

²³⁰ Pavel Țugui, „Informație privind probleme ale activității științifice pe tărâmul istoriei”, 30 ianuarie 1957, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no. 2/1957, f. 4.

transform into a revolution because the boyars betrayed the cause once they were unsure of the tsar backing, which would have maintained the revolt within the limits of their class interests.²³¹

In the end, in the third volume, the 1821 movement will be represented as the revolutionary outburst of the social and political crisis of feudalism in the Principalities.

At the same time, D. Prodan led a constant struggle during the fifties to impose an interpretation of 1784 revolt that admitted the national motivation of the participants in the events. The debate of 1960 on this last topic officially entrenched the revolt's representation as a "Romanian social movement." The year 1784 had been "the peak moment in the Romanian serfs' struggle for emancipation in Transylvania and the beginning of the crisis of feudalism itself". But, "as they began their battle for liberation, the Romanian serfs entered as a mass in the struggle for national emancipation." They fought for "the elevation of their own people from a status of inferiority to its rightful place. [...] Taking part into the general struggle against feudalism, they were simultaneously contributing to the rise of the Romanian people."²³² The association between the national and social causes was helped by another cardinal principle of history-writing on Transylvania under communism: the double exploitation suffered by Romanians. According to Prodan,

the conflict was even more accentuated by the national and religious differences between rulers and subjects. [...] The struggle was sharpening, especially the opposition between the Romanian people and aristocratic 'nations' ruling the country. Romanians were always denied their being and religion. They fought to emancipate themselves from this position of inferiority, from being tolerated. The struggle against national oppression could not be separated from the social conflict.²³³

M. Constantinescu had his own way of describing this historical position of the "double yoke" experienced by Romanian serfs: "the crucial question of extra-economic coercion." In his view, Horea's uprising was the paradigmatic example for the manifestation of this historical reality. He

²³¹ „Răscoala condusă de Tudor Vladimirescu”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 5, an XIII, 1960. pp. 191-192.

²³² „Discuție cu privire la Răscoala din 1784”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 4, an XIII, 1960. pp. 257-256.

²³³ D. Prodan, „Răscoala lui Horea”, in Oțetea, Prodan, Berza, et al., *Ibidem*, pp. 747-748.

would therefore criticize C. Daicoviciu, Șt. Pascu, and V. Cheresteșiu (coordinators of the monograph *History of Transylvania*) in his report for giving only six pages to the event. He considered it subversive to the “economic, social, and national progressiveness of the movement.”²³⁴ The thesis of the double yoke was confirmed by no other than Marx. In his manuscripts about Romanians, Marx described in detail and with praise the 1784 movement. He closed his exposition by summarizing the guiding ideas of the movement: “Horea became the hero of folk tales. The idea of Dacia’s rebirth and the regrets of the hovel dwellers were depicted by urban poets; this will accelerate the development of Romanian literature.”²³⁵

The two movements of 1784 and 1821 were also depicted as examples of the Romanians’ consciousness of kinship. Both Prodan and Oțetea considered that they also indicated the Romanians people’s unity across borders. For 1784, the imperative of national empathy toward Horea’s rebellion was formulated by Prodan as a given: “we don’t know yet the reverberations the revolt had in Țara Românească and Moldova, but they undoubtedly existed...” The rumors about Horea’s connections with Țara Românească were, for the author, indicative of the “the spirit of solidarity with the Romanians beyond the Carpathians that could be noticed among the peasants and which was feared by their adversaries. And now it was even more important than ever, at a time of awakening for national consciousness.” Searching for rhetorical effect, Prodan closed his chapter with a quote from Bălcescu, who considered that Horea inscribed “the rights of the Romanian nation and political and social program of future revolutions.”²³⁶

Oțetea, on the other hand, underscored Tudor Vladimirescu’s quality of maybe the first modern leader of the nation. According to the director of the Academy’s Institute of History in

²³⁴ Miron Constantinescu, „Observații la „Istoria Transilvaniei””, *Ibidem*, f. 11.

²³⁵ „Însemnările inedite ale lui Karl Marx cu privire la anul revoluționar 1848 în Țările Române”, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no. 33/1960, f. 7.

²³⁶ D. Prodan, „Răscoala lui Horea”, *Ibidem*, pp. 789-790.

Bucharest, “Tudor’s personality had such a lasting impact on the collective remembrance of the people that it will inspire all its future struggles. Even the exploiters were horrified to the bottom of their souls, for in any peasant movement that followed, they saw Tudor’s image rising.” The significance of 1821 lay also in the fact that the reactions it provoked in Transylvania and Moldova demonstrated the awakening of the the Romanians’ collective consciousness. Oțetea added that “the national feeling that inspired Tudor, the identification of the motherland with the masses, and his attempt to establish common action with Moldova for gaining rights in the two Principalities indicated that the ideas of independence and freedom entered the masses and had become material forces.”²³⁷ Horea and Tudor, 1821 and 1784, accelerated, according to the authors of the treatise’s third volume, the diffusion of “the national ideology” within the entire Romanian people. It should be noted however that both historians writing about these movements identified them as “the beginning of the crisis of feudalism.” At the same time, they perceived these movements as culmination points or manifestations of a national consciousness coming into its own.

In other words, the final reading of these events was that they were *necessarily* both social and national. Once they took place, the process of social, national, and political emancipation became inevitable. This argument would reinforce a recurrent theme of the various speeches during the 1859 Centennial: “the creation of the Romanian nation-state was not just a fortunate happening, the result of a propitious alignment of events. It was an objective, necessary stage in [national] social development.”²³⁸ The third volume did indeed institute what its authors

²³⁷ A. Oțetea, „Mișcarea revoluționară din 1821”, *Ibidem*, p. 903.

²³⁸ Quoted from M. Ralea presentation entitled “Aspectele socio-culturale ale Unirii” held at the Anniversary Session of the RPR Academy during the 1859 Centennial celebrations in *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 1, an XII, 1959, p. 307.

perceived as a permanent and unassailable connection between social emancipation, cultural nationalism, and people's consciousness of kinship.

In this context, the political events of Romania's modern history, particularly those that culminated in the unification of 1859, would be inscribed into a form of syncretic historical determinism that combined economic, social, and national elements. The third volume introduced for the first time in history-writing under communism an altered teleology of progress that factored in the Nation as central symbol of political mobilization. In the last section of the volume, the authors drove this point home. By appealing to the political thought of national intelligentsia representatives, such as the members of the Transylvania School, N. Bălcescu, or M. Kogălniceanu, they emphasized the central role of the past in the entrenchment of the Romanian Nation's political, social, and historical rights. Making reference to M. Kogălniceanu, the authors concluded that "knowledge of the past justified the reforms that favored society's organic development."²³⁹ To conclude, I argue that this section of the treatise officialized the legitimacy of romantic nationalism's contribution to social, economic, and political progress. In this manner, historians successfully tied the national idea into the Marxist-Leninist teleology of the people's historical development. *Historia magistra vitae* encoded in a national key complemented now the ideological understanding of realities past, present, and future.

6. Volume Four

The publication in early 1964 of the fourth volume of the *Tratat de istorie a României* represented the end of a stage in the evolution of history-production in Romania under communism. This last part of the treatise should have been the official interpretation of the first stage of national modern history. But, between 1964 and 1966, the communist regime underwent

²³⁹ Al. Elian, et al., „Dezvoltarea cultural în perioada destrămării feudalismului”, *Ibidem*, pp. 1100,

a series of formative events that further altered the relevance of the party-historians relationship in reference to the crystallization of a master-narrative about the nation: the Declaration of 1964, the succession of N. Ceaușescu at the head of the RWP; the Ninth Party Congress (in reality the fourth, but N. Ceaușescu changed the chorology as he considered the first party congress the founding one, from 1921); the change of name of both the party (Romanian Communist Party) and of the country (The Socialist Republic of Romania); the accentuation of the RCP's autonomist foreign policy; and, the re-opening of the Museum of Party History that now advanced a national discourse about the RCP. All these factored in to subvert the pertinence of the historiographical approach of the fourth volume for the most important historical moments it dealt with: the 1848 revolution, the 1859 unification and Al. I. Cuza's rule; the 1877 independence war; and 19th century Romanian culture.

Nevertheless, the volume was significant because it revealed, much more than the previous ones, a historical front's caught in between the method of analysis based on succession of socio-economic formations (class struggle as the motive force of change) and a deepening of historical and cultural syncretism in historiography with a view to the past. The volume did promote a rather rigid employment of the historical materialist method. However, the constants of the national narrative (ethnic unity and continuity, national consciousness, cultural originality and awakening, composite interpretation of society on the basis of national priorities, and the necessity of national unification) configured by the previous volumes (and by the epistemic debates at the time) exerted obvious interpretative pressure on the authors. What resulted was an approach based on a sort of national-historical materialism.

Just like in the case of the previous volumes, the general approach significantly depended on the coordinators of this section of the treatise. In the case of the first, the Cluj group led by

Daicoviciu gave a rather traditional reading of the concept of the origin of the Romanian people, deeply embedded in pre-1945 discussions on the topic. For the second, the influence of Cămpina generated a synthesis between a reading in a key of class struggle and one focused on national emancipation and heroes of the people. The third, because of Oțetea and Prodan, basically merged struggle for socio-economic change with national emancipation and the rise of national consciousness. The first three volumes, because of the authority of the authors, who in their turn had been fundamentally influenced by pre-communist epistemic socialization, basically officialized a master-narrative of the people (ethno-culturally ascribed) as the actor of Progress in history. In contrast, the fourth volume (actually the first tome of what originally was the third volume) was split between two interpretations of history in the spirit of the party: P. Constantinescu-Iași's and V. Maciu's. The first maintained his internationalist, pro-Soviet view of Romania's history. He hardly adjusted to the party's gradual turn toward a more nationally centered history-production. But, at the same time, his influence was waning for two reasons: his own inability to fully commit to the treatise (because of both personal flaws and institutional over-commitment) and his gradual, but steady institutional decline (by mid-sixties he was merely a symbolic figure of the party's 'heroism' during its 'underground' years).

V. Maciu was the embodiment of the fusion of *partiinost* and national history. As we have already seen, in 1958, he was reprimanded for his attempts to expand the pool of progressive classes and personalities in Romania's modern history. He also sided with A. Oțetea in the debate over the just nature of the country's involvement in the First World War. Considering that he had been one of the authors of Roller's textbook, Maciu was an epitome for the adaptation of party promoted historians: those who advanced as a result of the institutional changes brought about by the politics of cultural revolution, but also moved toward a more a

nationally motivated and emphatic history-production mainly because of their internalization of the general values of their epistemic community. The ultimate recognition of Maciu's role on the historical front will be his admittance into the Academy in 1963 as standing member (together with other historians directly involved in the writing of the treatise: M. Berza, Șt. Pascu, D. Pippiddi, Nicolăescu-Plopșor). Last but not least, a third coordinator was Dan Berindei (Constantinescu-Iași's close collaborator), a historian who also suffered the wrath of the party because of 'right wing deviation' in his 1957-1958 articles on modern history.

In April 1959, the DPC reported optimistically that the work at the national history treatise was going well, that "communist historians lead the work, for they are recognized by their peers as the most competent in the field, not only in what concerns their understanding of history, but also in terms of the knowledge of the facts." And among them, Constantinescu-Iași was singled out for his "careful involvement in and prodigious activity for the coordination of the work at the treatise." Moreover, "in case of the third volume, where work had fallen behind, the collective caught up, being now within the assigned schedule."²⁴⁰ By September, though, the DPC evaluation changed drastically. The head of the Science and Culture Section, P. Țugui, drafted two reports that contained serious criticism of Constantinescu-Iași and of his coordination of the volume. He was at fault for "spending too much time abroad, thus exercising a weak control over editorial collectives."²⁴¹ Consequently, "he is not able to competently direct and organize the authors involved." The result was that "the main problems of greatest ideological and political importance regarding modern and contemporary history have not been properly

²⁴⁰ „Referat cu privire la stadiul muncii de elaborare a tratatului de istorie a României”, 3 aprilie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no. 12/1959, ff. 121-122.

²⁴¹ Pavel Țugui, „Informare privind lucrările la Tratatul de istorie a României”, 10 septembrie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.29/1959, f. 55.

clarified. Confusion on these topics persists among historians.”²⁴² The activity at the fourth volume became so muddled that the DPC decided to set a discussion of its main subjects only with Romanian historians, advising against the co-option of Soviet counterparts because “numerous problems have yet to be settled among our historians.”²⁴³ It is important to note that the drafting, interpretation, and publication of Marx’s manuscripts on the Romanians did not involve Constantinescu-Iași or for that matter any of the editors of the fourth volume.

This criticism also had an institutional impact. In 1959, C. Daicoviciu replaced Constantinescu-Iași as president of the Section of Historical Sciences, Linguistics, Literature and Arts of the Academy. In 1963, V. Maciu was scheduled to replace the latter as president of the Romanian-Soviet Institute. A year earlier, Maciu was given a sabbatical from the Department of History of Bucharest University (he was dean) in order to be able to fully dedicate himself to the fourth volume of the treatise. Under the circumstances, a conclusion from P. Țugui’s memoirs does seem to hold some ground: “from 1959 to 1962, Constantinescu-Iași gave up on theses ordered by politicians (sic!) and accepted Maciu’s points of view.”²⁴⁴ What Țugui was trying to say, behind his fictionalizing account of historical writing’s independence, was that, under circumstances of a changing party-line and of institutional pressure, Constantinescu-Iași was forced to adapt to a new understanding of the relationship between *partiinost* and national history; and Maciu was a prominent representative of this new tide in history-production.

The transformation that Constantinescu-Iași was forced to go through was apparent from his change of interpretation of the 1848 revolution. During the historians’ discussion on this subject, he intervened to clarify the debate on the formulas “the revolution in Transylvania” vs.

²⁴² „Referat cu privire la stadiul elaborării „Tratatului de Istoria României”, 16 septembrie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.29/1959, f. 94.

²⁴³ *Idem*, f. 56.

²⁴⁴ Țugui, *Istoria și limba...*, p. 159.

“The Romanians’ revolution in Transylvania”. He declared that “it didn’t go through anybody’s mind to make an ethnic distinction” because “the 1848 revolution was not a national movement, but an upheaval with wide revolutionary breadth.” He added that “for Transylvania we will underline the integrity of the Romanian revolution, while also showing the tendencies toward unity that existed at the time.”²⁴⁵ Only a year later, he had an intervention that revealed a slight change of focus: “the revolution of 1848 had to be taken en bloc with an emphasis on national unification. At the same time, we have to show the strong connections between revolutionaries from the Romanian states and those from other countries in Europe along with the fact the Romanian revolution integrated itself in the general European movement of 1848.”²⁴⁶ By 1964, when volume four was published, the interpretation of the events had gone through an additional change: “the revolution of 1848, the most advanced outpost in the East of the European revolutionary struggle, was the peak of the Romanian people’s struggle for overcoming feudalism, for democratic freedoms, and a crucial moment in the struggle for independence and national unification.”²⁴⁷ To this reading, Constantinescu-Iași, in his chapter on culture, added a supplementary national conditioning in stating that the socio-economic and political conditions created between 1848 and 1878 only accelerated the existing “the national liberation movement of Romanians from Transylvania.”²⁴⁸ From 1959 to 1964, Constantinescu-Iași altered his interpretation of 1848, from a local manifestation of a European phenomenon with no significant national determinations, to a Romanian, unitary movement that spearheaded in the East the European revolution. Moreover, starting with 1848, the Romanians of Transylvania had begun a

²⁴⁵ „Dezbateri asupra problemelor revoluției din 1848”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 3, an XII, 1959, pp. 242.

²⁴⁶ “‘Istoria României’, sarcină principală a istoricilor din patria noastră” *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 3, an XIII, 1960, p.16.

²⁴⁷ Gh. Georgescu-Buzău, „Revoluția în Țara Românească”, P. Constantinescu-Iași, V Maciu, et al., *Istoria României. Volumul IV. Formarea și consolidarea orânduirii capitaliste* (București: Editura Academiei RPR, 1964), p. 113.

²⁴⁸ P. Constantinescu-Iași și Savian Bratu, „Cultura”, in Constantinescu-Iași, Maciu, et al., *Ibidem*, p. 769.

liberation movement focused on social emancipation and national unification. In other words, by 1964, the 1848 movement in Romania was not only national, but also a revolutionary beacon in Eastern Europe and in the Balkans.

Furthermore, both the discussions on the nature of the 1848 revolution in Transylvania and the respective sections of the treaty did promote an explanation that had, by implication, an ethnic coloring of the events. Two participants at the 1959 debate on the topic insisted that the authors of the third volume, particularly V. Cheresteșiu (the one who ultimately wrote the respective chapter), failed to clarify “the tragic conflict between the Romanian and Hungarian people between 1848 and 1849.” The first speaker, T. Bugnariu²⁴⁹, criticized the initial report on the chapter for “unilaterally focusing on the negative aspects of the Blaj Assembly [the largest gathering of Romanian revolutionaries in Transylvania in 1848, the cardinal moment of the movement in this province]. One is left with the impression that the only meaning of this event was the fact that the participants sang ‘*Gott erhalte!*’²⁵⁰ But the participants also asked for democratic freedoms, national liberty and the abolition of serfdom.” Bugnariu continued by arguing that

the internal contradictions of the feudal society during this period complicate into multiple facets. For instance, the conflict between nobles and serfs becomes a struggle between nobles, the majority of whom are Hungarian, and the serf, who most of them are Romanians. [...] if the matter of the social conflict is easy to explain, the difficulty caused by national claims, the problem of the conflict between Hungarians and Romanians is complex. [...] The

²⁴⁹ Teodor Bugnariu was a sociologist. In 1959, he was chair of the Philosophy Department at Bucharest University and standing member of the Academy (1955). In 1956 he was deputy minister of education. More significantly, in 1944-1945 he was mayor of Cluj and until 1948 inspector in the Department of Nationalities. At the same time, in 1957 he becomes the son-in-law of Romanian philosopher Lucian Blaga.

²⁵⁰ *Gott erhalte!* was the anthem of Francis II, the Hapsburg Emperor. In the first phase of the 1848-1849 revolution in Transylvania, the Romanian leaders declared that they only defended the rights of their people and that they remained loyal to the Hapsburg Emperor. Their argument was that the Hungarian revolutionaries decided to unite the province with Hungary without recognizing the Romanian’s national and political rights. Consequently, for a few months Transylvania was the theatre of a civil war. Only in 1849, in the context of the military intervention of great powers, at the initiative of N. Bălcescu and others, the Romanian and Hungarian leaders began negotiating an alliance.

draft does not explain clearly enough the combination between the socio-agrarian movement and the national one.²⁵¹

P. P. Panaitescu, the second of the two speakers mentioned, started first from the principle that the movement of the Transylvanians ought to be integrated into the whole general Romanian revolution. From here, he added a twist to Bugnariu's standpoint. He proposed that the nature of the Romanian revolutionary dynamics in Transylvania should not be researched from the point of view of the Hungarian movement, but "in relation to Romanian ideas and needs, in reference with the more or less close ties with the revolution in Muntenia and Moldova, with issues such as independence and, most importantly, social liberation."²⁵² Both interventions will significantly influence the fourth volume analysis of the relationship between Romanians and Hungarians in 1848 and of the relationship between the political groups in Transylvania and those in the Principalities.

One additional element should be brought into this discussion. As already presented, Marx's manuscripts on the Romanians considered the unification of Transylvania with Hungary illegitimate. Marx also heavily criticized Kossuth and other 1848 Hungarian leaders for promoting a total disregard of fellow nationalities, which were assimilated into the Hungarian nation. Furthermore, he quoted Kossuth saying "the Hungarian is noble. Only those noble can rule the nation."²⁵³ Marx also had harsh words about the economic situation of the Romanians during mid-nineteenth century: "this mass reduced to barbarism, upon which still bears the feudal yoke of Hungarian landowners." He then concluded that "the Vlah nationality [Romanians, n.a.] can have an important role in the final resolution of the problems of this region [Eastern Europe,

²⁵¹ „Dezbateri asupra problemelor revoluției din 1848”, *ibidem*, pp. 235-236.

²⁵² *Idem*, p. 228 and p. 236.

²⁵³ „Însemnările inedite ale lui Karl Marx...”, *Ibidem*, ff. 3-4.

n.a].”²⁵⁴ All in all, the Hungarian 1848 movement took the brunt of Marx’s scorn, while the Romanian one was, if not praised, at least approved of. Unsurprisingly, Marx’s thoughts (better said notes) formed the backbone of the solution found by the authors of the treatise’s fourth volume to the dilemma described by Bugnariu.

In the opening chapter on the fourth volume, in the section of Transylvania, V. Cheresteşiu presented the premises for judging the program of the Hungarian movement. The historical actor that he signaled out was “the nobility, which, despite its promotion of bourgeois change in Hungary, preserved its antiquated conceptions about the nation and the state.” According to them, “modern Hungary had to include all the territories that once belonged, before the Ottoman rule, to the crown of Saint Stephan. This meant the annexation of the Transylvania and the Magyarization of the Romanians living in the province.”²⁵⁵ In other words, the historian stated that 1848 in Hungary was founded upon great power chauvinism, to use communist lingo. Because of this ‘original sin’, the same author continued, “the Magyar government adopted in 1848 and 1849 an erroneous national policy. It refused to admit the correctness of the Romanian national claims. It maintained the nationalist thesis of the leading role and the cultural superiority of the Hungarian people.”²⁵⁶ Under the circumstances, the argument went, “the vision of the Hungarian nation belonging to the enbourgeoisied nobility did not rely on the bourgeois idea of the national state, which was supposed to encompass only the territories inhabited in majority by the same people. It drew upon the feudal conception according to which the state belonged to a

²⁵⁴ „Marx, Engles, Lenin. Unele aprecieri ale clasicilor marxismului despre istoria țărilor românești: Valahia, Moldova, Transilvania”, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.34/1960, f. 3.

²⁵⁵ V. Cheresteşiu, „Transilvania. Ascuțirea contradicțiilor naționale”, in Constantinescu-Iași, Maciu et al., *ibidem*, p. 33.

²⁵⁶ V. Cheresteşiu, „Revoluția din 1848 din Transilvania”, in *ibidem*, p. 115

‘nation’ that included only the nobility.”²⁵⁷ The author, and by implication the volume, therefore delegitimized the Hungarian 1848 movement, for it labeled it non-progressive on both social and national bases. Therefore, in this reading, conflict was unavoidable, despite the fact that 1848 in Transylvania was not a struggle between Romanians and Hungarians. But, because it was the political right of Romanians to form a nation-state that included Transylvania, any contention to the contrary on the Hungarian side equaled to a denial of a perceived given: the predominance, continuity, and ancient origin of the Romanians in this province. To paraphrase a quote by S. Bărnuțiu, used by Cheresteșiu, the volume declared that Romanians could be a free nation only if it was allowed to form its own nation-state, none other than an equivalent of contemporary Romania. Cheresteșiu’s rationale consisted in claiming that the Romanian side of 1848 in Transylvania, in contrast with the Hungarian one, represented a legitimate movement of self-determination, in the Leninist understanding of the concept.²⁵⁸

The national reading of the 1848 movement in Transylvania was given, however, a scope that was wider than the Leninist conceptual framework of self-determination. The so-called “aspirations of the Romanian nation” were not motivated solely by “the profound economic factors underling the urge towards a national state” (Lenin). A subjective factor was also given significant weight: “the judicious longings of the people for gaining national rights” was “the foundation of a dignified national life.” The programmatic moment of this drive for national dignity was the oath at the Blaj gathering on the ‘Field of Liberty’ (*Cîmpul Libertății*). At this point the employment of a national interpretation to history for the sake of the present purpose

²⁵⁷ *Idem*, p. 124.

²⁵⁸ Lenin considered that “the tendency of every national movement is towards the formation of *national states*, under which these requirements of modern capitalism are best satisfied. The most profound economic factors drive towards this goal, and, therefore, for the whole of Western Europe, nay, for the entire civilized world, the national state is *typical* and normal for the capitalist period.” Therefore, “the self-determination of nations means the political separation of these nations from alien national bodies, and the formation of an independent national state.” See Lenin’s *Collected Works*, Volume 20 (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1972), pp. 393-454.

legitimation becomes obvious. The description of the demands from Blaj, which was the opposite of the initial interpretation of the events given by Cheresteșiu, mirror-imaged RWP's vision of regime identity (pride, authenticity, self-sufficiency, non-interference), as it had been formulated until 1964 and then officially inscribed in the party Declaration issued the same year. So, V. Cheresteșiu wrote that the oath of the participants in Blaj stated that

they will always keep the Romanian nation on "the right and legitimate path". The nation will be defended "against any attack and oppression." They would never work "against the rights and interests of the Romanian nation." They will "defend our Romanian law and language, as well as liberty, equality, and fraternity." [...] Nobody will be suppressed and no one's suppression will be abided to. "They will work toward the abolition of serfdom, industrial and trade emancipation, the safeguarding of right, the furthering of the good of humanity, of the Romanian nation and of our motherland."²⁵⁹

The national-social program of the 1848 Romanian revolutionaries in Transylvania became no more and less, a preview to the communist party's plan of defending, developing, and directing the Romanian nation into socialism.

To return to the general reading of the 1848 revolution, it should be noted that there were two complimentary interpretations of its nature as a bloc. First, the Leninist one, in the sense that

national freedom could not be ensured within the narrow framework of Transylvania. [...] The intensification of the economic relations between Transylvania, Moldova and Țara Românească, the rapid economic development of these regions' economies, the role of the lower Danube and of the Black Sea in the transport of goods and merchandise convinced the Romanian bourgeoisie in Transylvania of the economic advantages that it could have in creating a single internal market, based on the unification of the three Romanian countries.²⁶⁰

At the same time however, another author of the fourth volume, Cornelia Bodea (who as we have seen worked in the 'Marx's manuscripts on the Romanians' project and had been heavily reprimanded in May 1958) argued that, during 1848-1878, "what could not be ignored [by communist historiography] was, beyond doubt, the *community of feeling* and the *community of*

²⁵⁹ *Idem*, p. 135.

²⁶⁰ *Idem*, p. 155.

national culture expressed through the consciousness of a unity of language, origin, and faith.”²⁶¹ [original emphases, n.a.] In this interpretative context, the “ideal of the one Romanian national, independent state” was a synthesis between economic necessity (i.e., determinism) and ethno-cultural permanencies characterized by “quality and ancientness”. The Romanians’ national cause in 1848 was therefore was both modernist and a perennialist²⁶²: on the one hand, the objective ascendance of unified capitalist relations; on the other hand, the awakening of a political idea founded upon the Romanian people’s identitarian coordinates (language, origin, continuity, unity).

The combination of self-determination and a definition of perceived alienation based ethno-cultural consciousness that lay at the core of the explanation of the 1848 revolution made the ideal of unification the central issue of the historical narrative about the second half of the 19th century. Again, this was a process historiographical sublimation as well. For example, in 1959 one of the authors of the fourth volume, Gh Georgescu-Buzău, declared that

though the problem of unification was not on the primary issue of the 1848 revolutionary movement in Țara Românească and Moldova, this issue did exist permanently in the consciousness and actions of revolutionary and progressive elements. After 1848, the entire activity of the Romanian patriots, at home or in exile, and of the popular masses was directed toward the accomplishment of this ideal.²⁶³

The same year, another member of the volume’s collective, Dan Berindei, considered that “it would be too much to say that the unification of the Romanian territories was the second issue of the revolution. It will, however, become the primary matter during [the revolutionaries] exile.”

²⁶¹ Bodea și Chiriță, „Formarea statului național”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, [1947-1962 Cercetarea Istoriei României în anii Puterii Populare] 6, an XV, 1962, p. 1599.

²⁶² According to Anthony D Smith, perennialism “refers to the historical antiquity of the type of social and political organization known as the ‘nation’, its immemorial or perennial character. [...] The perennialist readily accepts the modernity of nationalism as a political movement and ideology, but regards nations either as updated versions of immemorial ethnic communities, or as collective cultural identities that have existed, alongside ethnic communities, in all epochs of human history.” Anthony D. Smith, *Nationalism and Modernism...*, p. 159.

²⁶³ Quoted from Georgescu-Buzău’s presentation entitled “The Ideological Preparation for the Principalities’ Unification” held at the Anniversary Session of the RPR Academy during the 1859 Centennial celebrations in *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 1, an XII, 1959, p. 311.

Nevertheless, according to him “it could be argued that at a latent level, it actually was the key stone of the revolution. But the revolutionaries realized this only during their period of emigration.”²⁶⁴ Berindei’s corrective to Buzau’s initial placement of the subject of unification on the agenda of the movement would be taken a step further in the fourth volume by V. Maciu. The co-coordinator of the fourth volume of the treatise, would squarely state that “the accomplishment of the unification and of the national independence the Romanian people was a constant concern for the representatives of revolutionary struggle. [...] The Romanians’ will to unity was formulated in straightforward fashion during the 1848 revolution.”²⁶⁵ Therefore, the movement “only strengthened the idea of the unification of the Romanians into on nation-state, a goal that was *also* founded on the fairly developed economic relations between the three regions.”²⁶⁶ It seems that the issue of centrality did not matter anymore; there was, however, an entrenchment of the principle of the unification’s pervasiveness across the entire Romanian movement. For Maciu, the goal had implicit preeminence, but not from a retroactive standpoint, as in Berindei’s case. The consequence was that the project of the nation-state could be situated earlier than 1859, which was now placed on a teleological trajectory of the national idea that culminated in the unification with Transylvania in 1918.

In 1962, in a special issue of *Studii* celebrating fifteen years of history-production under communism, Cornelia Bodea officially admitted that “regarding the period of the formation of the national state” there have been “some difficulties and mistakes inherent to a new beginning.”²⁶⁷ She was referring to Roller’s interpretation of the matter in question, who basically argued that the unification, despite efforts from the masses, had been done by foreign

²⁶⁴ „Dezbateri asupra problemelor revoluției din 1848”, *Ibidem*, p. 234.

²⁶⁵ V. Maciu, „Caracterul și urmările revoluției”, in Constantinescu-Iași, Maciu et al., *ibidem*, p. 168.

²⁶⁶ *Idem*, p.172.

²⁶⁷ Bodea și Chiriță, „Formarea statului național”, *Ibidem*, p. 1611.

powers only in the interest of the exploiting classes. The only progressiveness he assigned to 1859 was the acceleration of the development of forces of production toward capitalist relations.²⁶⁸ In other words, Roller did not discuss the unification from the point of view of the necessity of the nation-state's realization. In contrast, for example, A. Oțetea considered that "the unification of the principalities was the result of the *entire* evolution of our people. The state...would not have had either the durability, or the capacity of attraction that made it the center of gravity for the *whole* Romanian people."²⁶⁹

With 1959, history-production would begin the gradual re-legitimization of the modern state on national bases – as the institutional framework most conducive the development of the Nation - radically departing in this way from Rollerist interpretations. Despite "a unification under circumstances of class struggle" (Bodea), the Romanian unitary state created the condition for a "national life" (Maciu) and "set the ground for the achievement of independence and the ultimate accomplishment of the *whole* Romanian people." (Berindei) Of course, on the path to unification, the masses were "the shock troops of the national party." (V. Popovici) Moreover, the result of the unification was "a bourgeois-landowning regime" where class struggle took place between the ruling classes and the peasantry, while the contradictions between the bourgeoisie and the landowners reflected mainly quarrels of power rather than contradictions that could generate the disappearance of such a regime (Buzau).²⁷⁰

The element that brought together the two contradictory readings of the past – positive-national and negative-Leninist – was the element that spearheaded the development and the rebirth of the people: the progressive and radical elements of the small and middle bourgeoisie,

²⁶⁸ *Istoria R.P.R. Manual pentru învățământul mediu...*, pp. 354-363.

²⁶⁹ A.Oțetea, „Însemnătatea istorică a Unirii”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 1, an XII, 1959, p. 21.

²⁷⁰ I tried here to summarize the general approach of the fourth volume on the nature and significance of the Unification. See P. Constantinescu-Iași, V Maciu, et al., *Istoria României. Volumul IV...*, pp. 227-238.

that is, the national intelligentsia of 1848. Moreover, the historical front was also given the possibility to re-assess the role of the first leader of the Romanian state – Al. I. Cuza. Already by 1959, most of the presentations or interventions at the Centennial positively evaluated Al. I. Cuza's role & rule. In 1960, Constantinescu-Iași pointed out that one of the duties of the treaty of national history was to clarify the general interpretation of the personality and importance of the first head of the modern state.²⁷¹ The treatise did indeed provide a fairly glowing characterization of Cuza:

with their inherent limits, the reforms initiated by Al. I. Cuza were progressive and this is the reason why the people preserved a bright and lasting memory (*vie și neștearsă amintire*) of the Unification ruler (*domnul Unirii*). During his rule the unification of Țara Românească and Moldova was consolidated, the nation-state was constituted, the 1864 agrarian reform was achieved along with the other reforms that established the grounds of the new social-economic, capitalist formation, which came about in Romania.²⁷²

L. Boia excellently defined the significance of his type of “rehabilitation”. Along with the rulers of the Romanian states in the Middle Ages, “the heroes of the anti-Ottoman war”, the reconsideration of Cuza signaled “the rise of the holders of power.” The fourth volume of the treatise founded the line of providential leaders that, by the beginning of the 1970s, will peak with the greatest of them all – N. Ceaușescu. By 1964, history-production provided a landmark historical personality: Cuza as the founder of the modern state. The only other founder that would be celebrated would be N. Ceaușescu. The time period between the two will be a “desert” through which the Romanian nation had passed and which, according to Boia, gave “meaning to a messianic expectation”, highlighting “the urgency of the saving act, and immeasurably amplified the stature of the dictator, who became comparable not with the little people of his

²⁷¹ “‘Istoria României’, sarcină principală a istoricilor..., p. 16.

²⁷² Dan Berindei, „Ultimii ani de domnie ai lui Alexandru Ioan Cuza”, in Constantinescu-Iași, Maciu, et al., *Ibidem*, p. 395.

own time but with the heroes of old, those who are already the stuff of epic.”²⁷³ The historical revisionism that began with the writing of the national history treatise will prepare public discourse and imagination for the proximate return of the cult of personality under communism in Romania.

The war of independence was described as an event that consolidated both capitalism and the nation-state. The fourth volume developed a narrative that, just as in the case of the 1848 and 1859, justified this stage in modern history both on socio-economic determinism and the imperative of further national development. In 1957, V. Maciu provided an early re-interpretation of the circumstances of the independence war. He argued that “the bourgeoisie’s struggle for the defense of an internal market coincided at the time with the struggle for Romania’s independence that was in the interest of the entire people.” He went as far as arguing that Carol I positive contribution at the war can be explained by the fact that he wanted to be “a sovereign in the true meaning of the word.”²⁷⁴ He will be reprimanded for this latter statement in 1958. But what is important is to note that seven years before the publication of the last volume of the treatise, there were tendencies toward a more inclusive analysis of the historical actors and their motivations in the process of the Principalities’ road to independence.

The treatise did maintain a class-struggle riddled interpretation of the roles of the various camps involved in the independence war: “toward this progressive action, the just war, not all Romanian classes and social strata took a patriotic attitude.”²⁷⁵ In other words, within the bourgeoisie there were sections of it that “enthusiastically supported the people’s movement for independence, for they realized that this meant a wider path for the country’s democratization

²⁷³ L. Boia, *History and Myth...*, p. 223.

²⁷⁴ Vasile Maciu, „Cu privire la războiul pentru independența României”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 4, an X, 1957, p. 114.

²⁷⁵ N. Adăniloie, „Clăsele sociale și purtarea războiului”, in Constantinescu-Iași, Maciu, et al., *Ibidem*, p. 634.

and for the completion of national unity.”²⁷⁶ But they were betrayed by treacherous leaders. Nevertheless, the *topos* that resulted from this narrative was one of a continuous and broader struggle for national emancipation. It was so because “the national cause was organically linked to social reform” (Bodea). In the end, the treatise proposed a reading of 1877/78 that again reflected the general political discourse of Romanian communism as officialized by the April 1964 Declaration:

The people’s participation at the 1877-1878 war brought Romania its independence, its juridical quality with all sovereign states. No power had the right to intervene in its internal affairs or to impose upon or control its foreign affairs. This created more favorable conditions for the people’s social struggle and for its striving toward national integration (*întregire*) through Transylvania’s unification with Romania. [...] Upon gaining sovereignty, from now on, the Romanian state could institute protectionist policies toward its industry, which development generated the strengthening of the proletariat, of its struggle against exploitation.²⁷⁷

Romania’s 1877 independence was a mirror image of the autonomy urges of the RWP. History provided the lesson of the past. This usable past was then framed in the conceptual coordinates of the communist regime self-perception in 1964. And most importantly, a founding moment of the Romanian modern nation had now gained the necessary translatability for the present to identify with it. History-production not only recuperated ethnic origin and continuity, but also pride over a glorious past, a permanence of people’s unity, a fusion of social with national emancipation, and ultimately, a independent nation-state.

The cement that brought together all these factors of the Nation in history was the agency of cultural nationalism. The national intelligentsia that appeared around the 1848 revolution and which then developed and institutionalized itself in the second half of the 19th century was gradually re-assessed. The fourth volume of the national history treatise constructed a taxonomy

²⁷⁶ V. Maciu, „Proclammarea independenței (9 mai 1877)”, *Ibidem*, p. 604.

²⁷⁷ N. Adălinoae, „Clăsele sociale și purtarea războiului”, *Ibidem*, pp. 638-639.

based on cultural-political views of its members. Reflective of party directives to write about a unitary national, emancipation movement, historians employed this taxonomy both for Principalities and Transylvania. Starting from the two culture theory, V. Chereșteșiu and P. Constantinescu-Iași identified four ideological categories in the first stage of Romania's modern history: revolutionary-democratic; liberal-democratic; liberal-radical; and, liberal-moderate.²⁷⁸ The revolutionary-democrats were "the most forward thinking", for "they relied on the peasantry as their social base. Their tactics was revolutionary struggle, as they aimed at the creation of peasant democracy tied to capitalist property, which exploitative nature could not be objectively perceived by them at the time." The most important representatives were N. Bălcescu, S. Bărnuțiu, and T. Cipariu. The liberal-democrats represented the industrial bourgeoisie and supported wide reforms in favor of the peasantry. They did not advocate revolution. The most important figures were M. Kogălniceanu and G. Barițiu. The radical-liberals came from the middle and small bourgeoisie and they admitted the necessity of antifeudal reforms, but wished to implement them only gradually without the shattering of the landowners as a class. Two names are mentioned: C. A. Rosetti and I. C. Brătianu. The first figured highly in historical accounts at the time, while in the case of the second, it was the first official half-hearted positive historical account, under communism, of the founder of the Liberal Party in Romania and patriarch of a political dynasty synonymous with the historical fate of pre-communist modern Romania. The fourth category, the liberal-moderates were characterized as self-contradictory, because, in spite of their progressive ideas, they engaged in collaboration with the landowners.

²⁷⁸ At the end of the sixties and in early seventies, Bulgarian history production proposed a similar taxonomy. Historians discussed about two ideological trends in the Revival movement in Bulgaria: revolutionary-democratic and bourgeois-liberal. The class factor was merely one of the factors in the development of the national cause. See Daskalov, *The Making of a Nation...*, pp. 143-144 or pp. 167-168

Here the relevant figure was I. Heliade Rădulescu, one of the authors of the political program of the 1848 revolution in Wallachia.²⁷⁹

Leaving aside the validity of such taxonomy, in my opinion its relevance lied in the fact that the authors of the fourth volume went to great lengths to construct an interpretative framework that would allow further discussion of various political and cultural personalities in accordance possible resonance of their activities into the present. These historical individuals' symbolic services will be called upon in accordance with the dynamics between history-writing and political discourse. We have already shown how people such as N. Bălcescu, M. Kogălniceanu, T. Cipariu, S. Bărnăuțiu, or G. Barițiu were convenient references upon making a national point in public discourse of either epistemic officials or party leaders. Many more will follow as the range of national issues will increase on the historical front agenda. The best example of trans-class recuperation of historical characters is a section of the fourth volume dealing with the economic thought in the Romanian territories in the second half of the 19th century. People of various political coloring such as G. Barițiu, I. Ghica, D. P. Marțian, P. S. Aurelian, or B. P. Hașdeu are listed and praised on two fundamental grounds: their support for domestic industrialization and protectionism.²⁸⁰ They constituted the panoply of thinkers that validated through their work and activity the regime's present focus on "national economic independence". Angela Harre, in her analysis of the history of the concept of progress in the Romanian context, pointed out that there was a noticeable continuity between "the communist strategy of development and its preceding model" based on "the overlaps of thinking and takeover of ideas." The distinctive practice of the communist regime was "to take strategies of development out of their ideological context and to integrate them into Marxist economic

²⁷⁹ P. Constantinescu-Iași, "Cultura", in Constantinescu-Iași, Maciu, et. al, *Ibidem*, pp. 687-690.

²⁸⁰ *Idem*, pp. 724-227.

theory.”²⁸¹ Harre only described a general symptom that was not limited to economic thought. In fact, as the discussed section of the fourth volume of *Tratat de istorie a României* indicated proved, the type of tradition that was rehabilitated unveiled in fact the nature of the ideological constructs central to the self-definition of the communist regime.

The chapter on culture from the treatise’s last volume actually pointed to the amorphous nature of progressiveness in historiography. For example, T. Maiorescu, the most important Romanian cultural thinker of the nineteenth century, was strongly criticized for his conservatism and “formalism.” At the same time though, his calls for the internalization of European scientific models and for the imperative of a general cultural background among literati and artists were praised. However, both Hașdeu and Xenopol were invoked in a rebuke of his “ideological cosmopolitanism.”²⁸² The latter conceptual construct is worth emphasizing. Many of the members of the national intelligentsia positively evaluated in this chapter advocated a distinct level of self-centeredness on the basis of defensive nationalism. For example, most of 19th century Romanian historians, such as Kogălniceanu, Hașdeu, Xenopol sought to “reassert their individual standing, the theme of *self-support*, the conviction that reliance on foreign assistance could not provide solutions, constituted a further recurring motif in my historians’ writings.”²⁸³ For example, A. D. Xenopol contended for “a profitable egoism” that inextricably connected value with nationality. According to him, “cosmopolitanism is not for us, at least when the internal ties that need to unite us are still confused.”²⁸⁴ The same historian argued that “only when a

²⁸¹ Angela Harre, “Conceptul de progres: relația conflictuală dintre liberalism și intervenția statală”, in Neumann and Heinen (eds.), *Istoria României prin concepte ...*, pp. 193.

²⁸² Constantinescu-Iași, “Cultura”, *ibidem*, pp. 727-729.

²⁸³ Barr, *Historians and Nationalism...*, p. 71.

²⁸⁴ Zub, *De la istorie critică la criticism...*, p. 135.

people reached self-consciousness, when it began to develop, will it not perish and it will fulfill its historical role on this earth.”²⁸⁵

Moreover, another model that is apparent in the chapter on culture of the fourth volume is that of the “partisans of militant history”. The authors of this section created a list of Transylvanian intellectuals with inclinations toward history-writing that were first situated in direct lineage of ethos with the members of the Transylvania School. Second, they are described as those who “used the revelations of the past as a weapon in their battle against social and national oppression.”²⁸⁶ Putting the two readings of the cultural mission of a historian, national militancy and self-support, one can notice that the fourth volume basically officialized a trajectory already quite obvious on the historical front: the rehabilitation of the conception of morality in history-writing that was simultaneously nationally and scientifically defined.

During late fifties and early sixties under communism, the combination between the insistence on the internal factor and the turn toward regime individuality gave a national coloring to cosmopolitanism. The latter would also be formulated as kowtowing (*ploconire*) to foreign values. Again this was a symptom of late Stalinism that, in Romania, toward the end of the seventies, will take the form of protochronism. At the same time, the recuperation of the Romantic definition of the nationally-scientific moral mission of the historian reignited a process of constant symbolic return into the past²⁸⁷ for purposes of making sense of the present. In other words, both the national history treatise and the thematic frameworks in which various historians were recuperated until 1964 show that the re-enchantment with epistemic traditions reinforced a growing autochthonism of Romanian communism. Furthermore, to move to a larger conclusion

²⁸⁵ Zub, *Istorie și istorici...*, p. 217.

²⁸⁶ Constatinescu-Iasi, “Cultura”, *Ibidem*, p. 739.

²⁸⁷ A. Cioroianu fittedly defined N. Ceaușescu’s history as one of a permanent symbolic return. See Cioroianu, *Pe umerii lui Marx...*, p. 394.

regarding the last volume of the *Tratat*, the historical front had carved new thematic treks for itself. First and foremost the analysis of the nation-state and of personalities with definitive role in its development; second, the ever-growing pantheon of Romanian culture; and third, a new reading of conflict and revolution in history based on the nationality principle. Despite its numerous propaganda-like formulations, the fourth volume did follow the trajectories of the previous three: a glorious national history that was ancient, continuous, unified, and progressive. In fact, the fourth volume's over-emphasis on class-struggle and economic determinism only strengthened the already apparent national historical teleology of the third volume. The very fact that national struggle and social emancipation were fused together throughout the entire first part of modern history basically cemented national determinism in history-production.

D. Conclusion: History and the Nation

At the end of the 1950s, the Nation as central motif of historical development re-entered the discourses of history-production via the affirmation of cultural individuality: origin and language as foundations for originality, unity, and continuity. In this sense, historians acted as cultural nationalists in the process of constructing a master-narrative of Romanian history under communism. The symbolic community that they created during this period marked by the drafting of a definitive monograph in national history was what Anthonny D. Smith called “vertical, demotic nation.” If one follows the master-narrative that developed up to 1964, the Romanians appear as a compact and popular community of kinship. Its original, historical culture was diffused across social strata and classes uniting them around common heritage and traditions, “especially when the latter came under threat from outside” (Smith). Membership was determined by birth in the sense that those who belonged usually shared, at the very least, a

community of origin and language. However, as it became obvious during the intra-party discussions of the November-December RWP Plenum, if one abided to the national interest (conditioned of course by *partiinost*), if s/he shared cultural and communitarian empathy with the Romanian people, then one could be accepted in the nation's body. Ethnic belonging was not a deal breaker if the individual accepted assimilation. Moreover, the demotic nature of the Nation as it appeared from history-production permitted an overcoming of socio-political conflict, of class struggle. Because the Nation was the people, national culture was the property of all members of the community, to a greater or lesser degree.²⁸⁸

At the same time though, the imperative of historical materialism in history-writing brought into the general account about the Nation a modernist facet, which prevented the latter's all out perennialist definition. First of all, the Nation was the result of the emergence of capitalism, that is, it was a product of modernity. Second, it was complete only once a nation-state was formed. And, because of the specific socio-economic nature of the state, the Nation was a bourgeois one. Therefore, historical development of the nation-state would give way to sharper and wider class contradictions because the society further differentiated as a result of institutional and economic progress. The modernist understanding of the Nation based on class-struggle was constantly in tension with the topics of national unity, interest, and culture. If the communist regime were to construct continuity between the present and the past based on the last three topics, then the determinism and implacable logic of historical materialism were subverted. This operation required a presupposition of solidarity and a vocation for unity across history. Subsequently, the demotic reading of the national community kicked in more often than not. The fundamental problem with the modernist definition of the Nation (i.e., Marxist-Leninist)

²⁸⁸ In this paragraph, I developed my argument by expanding the body of Smith's definition. For the exact formulation about the "vertical nation" see Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity* (London: Penguin, 1991), p. 53.

was that the nature of the fundamental actor in history ran counter to it. If the people (with a common origin, language, culture, experience of struggle, and feeling) was *the* subject and agent of history, then the Nation could easily be projected far back into centuries, particularly once a state tradition was established. The master-narrative of the *Tratat de istorie a Romîniei* was mired into this tension between a perceived modern phenomenon constructed upon a people, the Romanians, which were purposefully defined along some ancestral, unassailable givens (i.e., ethnic ascription).

What prepared a higher exaltation of the Nation as central symbol in the master-narrative of history-production in the sixties was the specific profile of the historical front. Reflective of a symptom inherited from pre-communist historiography, “professionalization and institutionalization was accompanied by an intensification of national sentiment.”²⁸⁹ First, the crystallization of a polycentric historical front was accomplished by reaction against M. Roller, whose approach was branded nationally nihilistic. The appeals to the proper scientific exercise of history-writing were applied upon themes and issues where it was considered that truth had been distorted. More often than not the latter presupposed making sense of the national past. Simultaneously, the party pursued a re-invention of the interpretative framework for its modernization project and a new basis for legitimating its identity. The ‘emancipation’ of the epistemic community coalesced with the reinvention of political leadership. The immediate consequences could be observed in the various DPC directives on how certain subjects were to be approached, what historical personalities had to be rehabilitated, and, ultimately, which past could be usable. *Partiinost* was merged with history as national science. Therefore, the increased

²⁸⁹ Barr, *Historians and Nationalism*, p. 76.

emphasis on methodological rigor and the institutional and personnel reforms concurred with the ideological exploitation of history to legitimize the national aspirations of the communist regime.

Moreover, the historical profession itself suffered from a foundational symptom of defining its mission as moral but in service of the national cause. In 1903, N. Iorga ominously formulated this muddled vision of a profession dedicated to truths via the nation:

I strive for a cultural and moral ideal for my country. He who attempts to hinder the fulfillment of the goal of my life's work is my enemy. He will be an enemy that I will never spare regardless of how painful or unpleasant would this be for me, in spite of any eventual unpleasantness that may fall upon me.²⁹⁰

Similar commitments, to lesser degrees of rhetorical intensity, were formulated by other historians as well. They too believed that their mission was to tell the truth for purposes of national enlightenment. Such a localized and rather salvationist reading of professional objectivity was augmented by the scientism which lay at the core of Marxism-Leninism. The result was the principle of a production of unitary, undeniable, and unshakable historical proofs for the contentious or symbolically exceptional moments, personalities, or periods in the nation's history. In this context, the combination between an impossibility of historiographical objectivity, the system of planned science, and an ever evolving party line resulted into asymptotic revisionism toward the national past. The *Tratat de istorie a României* only represented the foundation both for the main themes of national history and for the main actors in the future development of the historical front along the path to building socialism in one country.

²⁹⁰ Năstasă. *Intelectualii și promovarea...* p. 170

Part Three: Toward the Socialist Nation (1964-1966)

VI

Politics of Sovereignty and the System of Planned Science (1964-1966)

A. Socialist Integration versus Alternative Geographies of Science

1. Preliminaries

The emancipation of the Romanian communist regime within the Soviet bloc was based on a re-definition of its position within political, cultural, and historical spaces. Ultimately, the self-assertiveness of the Romanian Workers' Party and of its polity relied on and developed alternative geographies both regionally and internationally (i.e., world-scale). Science, particularly history, was positioned in areas consistent with the crystallizing indentitarian narrative of the regime itself. One can identify at least three trajectories for this phenomenon: a self-proclaimed re-integration into Europe at the level of epistemic communication and exchange; the proposal of a regional project of research – South-Eastern European studies (with its corollaries Balkan and Byzantine studies); and, last but not least, the rejection of Central Europe if identified with the historiographical re-consideration of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Moreover, it all happened in the context of a Soviet-coordinated project of cultural-scientific integration that complemented the principle of a unitary socialist economy/plan within the

Camecon. However, these alternative geographies of science were circumscribed as the discourse of the Nation increasingly gained, both politically and epistemically, more unitary, transhistorical, primordialist, and parochialist tones.

The new spaces for science did allow for theoretical import, interdisciplinarity, and comparativism, but these were rather side-effects that permitted at most the preservation of niche-communities. The incursions into territories parallel or adjacent to “the socialist camp” became opportunities for the assertion of ethnic authenticity, national ‘acientness’, cultural exceptionalism, or scientific competition over international prestige. In the case of Romania, the primary effect of this process was the political assertion of regional leadership/primacy and the epistemic re-consolidation of manifestations of the Nation across time. Other by-products of the process were the entrenchment of tradition and of the study of universal history on the historical front.

The search for alternative venues for scientific cooperation reached a significant, concerted level after 1956, around the same time when the process of re-institutionalization and re-professionalization had begun. By 1958, the Balkans seemed to constitute an interesting outlet in international politics for the RWP as well. The communist regime was growing its own legs on the path of individuality (e.g., the retreat of the Soviet troops, the disbandment of the Sovroms, its crucial role in aiding the crushing of the Hungarian revolution, the clampdown on representatives of the Hungarian minority which led to policies of cultural Romanization, the Romanian involvement in the Sino-Soviet dispute). Also, the turn toward a national science, although controlled by the party, brought another issue at the table: the activity and status of Institute for Romanian-Soviet Studies (IRSS). All these phenomena combined to generate the specific trajectories of science (in our case history) in mid-1960s under the particular

circumstances of a move, encouraged by the “Moscow center”, toward a common scientific market and production within the Soviet bloc.

2. Southeastern Europe: Tradition, Universal History, and Identity

In 1959, at the fifteenth anniversary of the Romania’s “liberation from the fascist yoke”, Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, the RWP’s General Secretary, stated that one of the goals of the regime’s foreign diplomacy was “the improvement of relations with countries from neighboring regions. This initiative materialized in several proposals by the Romanian government regarding the creation of an extensive inter-Balkan collaboration. Most recently, [we advanced] our project of a conference of the countries in the Balkans during which we could discuss and adopt a treatise of mutual understanding and collective security guaranteed by the great powers.”¹ He went as far as to propose, with the endorsement of the USSR, the transformation of the Balkans into a nuclear-weapons free region. This initiative overlapped with the Soviet strategic interests in the area of Europe (Greece and Turkey had joined NATO in 1951), particularly as Nikita Khrushchev made several attempts to bury the hatchet with Tito’s Yugoslavia. It was no coincidence that one of the three meetings between Khrushchev and Tito in the timeframe fall 1956 and summer 1957 was secretly organized in Bucharest.² By mid-1960s, the RWP leadership already followed its own agenda in the negotiations with the League of Communists in Yugoslavia, which materialized in the Iron Gates dam in 1964 and in Tito’s indirect support during Romania’s contestation of Khrushchev’s plan for greater economic integration in the Comecon.

¹ Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, „A XV-a aniversare a eliberării României de sub jugul fascist”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 4, an XII, 1959, pp. 19.

² See “Khrushchev and Tito-Summer 1958”, RFE/OSA, 72-4-127, July 6, 1958 and “Khrushchev in Yugoslavia”, RFE/OSA, 108-5-181, August, 19, 1963.

The first discussions about the creation of an institutional framework for regional cooperation, adjacent to that within the Soviet bloc, appeared among historians between 1953 and 1955 with two projects of collaboration: on Byzantine studies and academic cooperation among higher-education institutions from the so-called “Danubian countries”.³ Neither took on a prominent role in the foreign relations of Romanian science. By 1958, a new project appeared that of an institute for Southeastern studies that could include research on the Balkans, on the Ottoman and Byzantine empires. It resonated both with the regime’s priorities on the region and with the tradition of the pre-communist historical profession. On the first matter, a report presented by Emil Condurachi, the director of the Institute of Archeology and soon to become general secretary of the Association for Southeastern European Studies (ASES), at the International Conference on Balkan Civilizations in Sinaia, Romania (July 1962), revealed the direct link between the new scientific initiative and the party’s international position: “We would like to mention that the mutual understanding which characterized for the most part the papers and debates of this symposium coincided entirely with the plea launched by the Romanian government, a few years back, for a peaceful and constructive collaboration between all the Balkan states.”⁴

On the second matter, before the wholesale restructuring of the scientific field and of historical studies in 1948, there were two institutions that focused on issues of regional research and collaboration. In 1913, Romanian historians Nicolae Iorga, Vasile Pârvan, and Gheorghe Munteanu Murgoci created the Institute for South-European Studies. N. Iorga was the head of this institute until his death; from 1940 to 1947, Ghe. Brătianu and N Bănescu were its directors.

³ See for example „Referat privind organizarea periodică de conferințe danubiene a cercetătorilor din domeniul antichității, din țările care se află în această regiune a Europei”, 5 decembrie, 5/1957, ff. 142-143.

⁴ Em. Condurachi, “Le colloque international de Sinaia sur les civilisations Balkaniques (8-14 juillet 1962)”, *Revue des Études Sud-Est Européennes*, tome I, no. 1-2, 1963, pp. 170.

In parallel, Victor Papacostea organized in 1937 the Institute for Balkan Studies and Research. As many authors remarked, these projects aimed at re-conceptualizing the region on the basis of both a common heritage and on the dominant role of Romanians in this area. Historian Al. Zub acknowledged the political dimension of Iorga's initiative in the sense of "the idea to diminish national tensions by becoming conscious of belonging to a common civilization, which roots required thorough study and by emphasizing common interests able to generate solidarity."⁵ Nevertheless, as early as 1911, in his speech of acceptance in the Academy, Iorga remarked that:

We have a national civilization to strengthen, nourishing it with all that we have preserved as monuments, traditions, and memories, while keeping it close to those trends of healthy renewal in European culture. This civilization will become for us, a people that regained, by economic and political justice, an endangered solidarity, an instrument of spiritual dominion [*domnie spirituală*] in the East we are and it should be known that we are. An institute for Southeastern Europe here in Bucharest, well organized and properly managed, would constitute by any scientific standard the first declaration of our rights⁶

It should not be forgotten that the first institute appeared in the aftermath of the Bucharest peace congress in 1913 (as a consequence of the two Balkan wars) among which participants Iorga was. Moreover, this initiative corresponded to Iorga's vision of a history written by the "small people". In 1929, he stated that:

We don't have a single reason to continue to accept humanity's history as it has been written by great peoples in divergent manner and form, based on claims that no method accepts. In using our geographical existence, as well as the syntheses that had been imposed upon us, we must establish the main lines and cardinal points for the development of the world that are ignored or missed by others.⁷

Along similar lines, Victor Papacostea considered that "the ethnic basis of the Balkan peoples was relatively unitary containing, to various degrees, the same elements (Thracian-Illyric, Roman, Greek, Slav, Turkish)." This gave them the outlook of a "human family, unique in its own way" with obvious common features despite undeniable specific differences in

⁵ Zub, *De la istorie critică...*, p. 236.

⁶ „Două concepții istorice”, Cuvântare de intrare în Academia Română (17 mai 1911) in Iorga, *Generalități...*, p. 94.

⁷ Hans-Christian Maner, „Noțiunea de Europa din perspectiva științei istorice românești”, in Neumann și Heinen (eds.), *Istoria României prin concept...* pp. 251-252.

mentality and culture.⁸ In a letter from 1959 to Anthanasie Joja, then minister of Education, Papacostea characterized the activity of his institute as “a laboratory where we studied, with equal interest, all the factors of which fusion generated, after many centuries of cohabitation, one people speaking different languages.” In the same document, Papacostea did admit, regarding Iorga’s Institute of Southeastern European Studies, that, because of the theory of “substratums” (first advocated by Bogdan P Hașdeu), this initiative was perceived sometimes as a means of advancing Romanian nationalism in the region.⁹ Indeed, as we have seen with Pârvan’s reading of the role of Geto-Dacians or with Iorga’s perception of Eastern Romanity, historians during the inter-war period more often than not ended up in claiming if not supremacy but primacy in the Balkans for the Romanians. Unsurprisingly, under communism, the new-old institute will provoke similar statements on the part of the historical front. For example, C. Daicoviciu, one of the foremost actors in the historical front, quoted approvingly Iorga, in his contribution in the special issue of *Studii* commemorating twenty-five years since the latter’s assassination, who argued that “in final analysis, there is *only one* nation at the basis of the *entire* oriental Romanity: the Geto-Dacians.”¹⁰ [my emphasis]

All things considered, it should be also said that the resurgence of Southeastern European studies (‘Balkanology’, Byzantology, Ottoman studies, modern history of the Balkans) was also part and parcel of the historical front’s turn toward universal history by mid-sixties. Again, the fundamental influence was Iorga. The latter considered that “a people’s history is fixed and preserved in the normal environment of human universality [...] History is a whole. Any national

⁸ Nicolae-Șerban Tanașoca, *Balkanologie și politică în România secolului XX. Victor Papacostea în documente din arhivele Securității și arhiva personală* (București: Editura Biblioteca Bucureștilor, 2010), p. 16.

⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 169-170.

¹⁰ C. Daicoviciu, „Nicolae Iorga și autohtonii”, in *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, „25 de ani de la moartea lui Nicolae Iorga”, nr.5, anul XVIII, 1965, p. 1229.

history is surrounded and crossed by any other historical developments. From them start continuous influences – from the smallest to the largest.”¹¹ After his trip of documentation in the Soviet Union, M Berza, the future director of the Institute for Southeastern European Studies and former assistant of Iorga, declared, following his mentor, that “any local history must situate itself in the context of a larger historical development, which, to an extensive degree conditions and explains it, without in any way decreasing the founding creative contribution of the internal factor.” Furthermore, according to him,

the study of the history of the Motherland has to universalize itself to a greater degree. This is necessary also for the purpose of increasing the prestige of our science abroad. We must not forget that we have a tradition from this point of view, which must be taken further. We ought to give it a novel sense and new vigor. N. Iorga’s name, its founder, is very often mentioned during international conferences.¹²

Another prominent figure of the historical front, A. Oțetea, agreed with his colleague, stating that “the fundamental idea of Nicolae Iorga’s historical thought, the integration of Romanian history in universal history, is a guiding principle also applied in the treatise *History of Romania*.”¹³ Such remark signaled a defining practice of mid to late sixties: on the one hand, history-production was legitimized retroactively by recourse to pre-communist epistemic founding-fathers; on the other hand, this process also indicated the level of un-referenced integration of historiographical traditions in historical writing produced from 1958 to 1964 [e.g., see my analysis of national history treatise’s treatment of Michel the Brave or of the process of ethnogenesis].

By 1965, the historical front recuperated N Iorga’s concept of “historiology”, which was, according to its creator, based on “the absolute unity of human life across space and time” that

¹¹ „Două concepții istorice”, in Iorga, *Generalități...*, p. 162.

¹² M. Berza, „Cercetările de istorie universală în URSS”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 5, an XV, 1962, p.1250 and p.1263.

¹³ Andrei Oțetea, „N. Iorga – Istoric al Românilor”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 5, an XV, 1962, pp. 1223.

relied on revealing historical integrality by means of “analogy, parallelism intuition, reproductive fantasy, and divination.”¹⁴ According to Iorga’s preface to *Materials for a Human Historiology*, an unfinished manuscript, historiology considered that

the facts *entered alive in the structure* of creation that [one] is putting together. These characteristic elements join together then in a *dynamic construction*. It is mainly about the *tragedy of this human kin (neam)* in which, if there are *scenes* that *illustrate (expun)*, there are *acts* that further carry on the *conflict*. Around the main actors there are others who don’t speak, because there is no point in them doing so, but even those who speak....do it only when, by what they say and do, take us further.”¹⁵ [original emphasis]

In the introduction of the same volume, he concluded that “the fundamental difference is between the history that tells everything that it knows, only for the purpose of telling it, and historiology which stops to comment only the characteristic, expressive fact.”¹⁶ Of the rather cryptic formulations on this concept by Iorga, what seemed to remain was the principle of grand trajectories of historical development in universal history, the principle of comparativity, and, dear to the communist regime, an underlining humanism of the scientific method¹⁷. Additionally, and maybe the most important idea, with which I will deal with later, because of its fundamental impact on the reading of the Nation in history, was the associated concept of “permanences” [*permanențe*] - geography, idea, and race. The crucial lesson that Iorga left to his colleagues was that, indeed national history was inextricably integrated into the universal one, but the latter could be understood only by means of using the former as guide and filter.¹⁸ Such vision

¹⁴ Iorga *apud* Al. Elian, „Nicolae Iorga și istoria universală”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 5, an XV, 1962, pp. 1261-1274.

¹⁵ “Prefață” in Nicolae Iorga, *Materiale pentru o istoriologie umană*, fragmente inedite publicate de Liliana N. Iorga, cuvânt înainte de D. M. Pippidi (București: Editura Academiei RSR, 1968), pp. 1-2.

¹⁶ „Alte deslușiri metodologice”, in Iorga, *Materiale pentru ...*, p. 16.

¹⁷ For example, Al. Elian concluded his article with the statement “man is at the center of Iorga’s meditations and preoccupations [*solicitudinii*]. This is the keystone to his conceptions of the world and of life.” Elian, “Nicolae Iorga și istoria universală”, *Ibidem*, p. 1247.

¹⁸ An account of a scientific session of the History Department of Bucharest University program (*catedra*) of universal history in March 1963 shows the rather national-centric understanding of universal history. Among the research tasks set up by those present were: “the study of neighboring countries, with a focus on relations and connections established across centuries; the study of the relations between Romania and the main imperialist countries. These studies can constitute original contributions to the research on imperialism; the research of

therefore contained in its very code the specter of exceptionalism, to which Iorga himself fell pray many a times, as did his fellow historians under communism.

The main principle that appeared from the transposition of the tradition of Southeastern European studies into the historical front was that of synthesis. Following Iorga, Romanian historians agreed that the country and the Nation were placed *at the center* of a space of congruence between East and West, Orient and Occident. The resulting *topos* was that of “a small people situated in a place favorable to syntheses that harmonized according to its own soul’s instincts and needs all borrowed elements.”¹⁹ According to C. Daicoviciu, the cardinal ideas of Iorga’s work, those of *unity* and *synthesis*, allowed for an extension of historical inquiry to the level of a Balkan and Southeastern European history.²⁰ Furthermore, in an article introducing to the Romanian public, in 1963, the International Association for Southeastern European Studies (IASEES), Em. Condurachi and Virgil Căndea (the general secretary of the Romanian Committee for Southeastern European Studies) announced that IASEES main purpose was “to shed light on millennia of existent cultural relations between them [ancient civilizations],

revolutionary exchanges between Romania and neighboring countries until 1917; the study of the antifascist movement for the liberation of Southeastern European countries and the contribution of the Romanian antifascist movement and Romanian antifascists to the antifascist movements in other countries; the study of the contribution of socialist Romania to the resolution of contemporary problems (economic, political, and cultural); countering various conceptions of reactionary historiography.” See C. Buşe, „Şedinţa catedrei de istorie universal a Facultăţii de istorie din Bucureşti”, in *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 3, an XVI, 1963, p. 706. Among those present there were A. Ōţetea, M. Berza, V. Maciu, Gh. Ştefan, even Iorga’s secretary Valeria Costăchel. However, the authors of the memorandum were N. Lupu, D. Almaş, and Radu Manolescu. All three of them were specialists on modern or contemporary history; D. Almaş will figure prominently in the later years as the main popularizer of the communist Pantheon of the great men of the Romanian Nation across history in his three volume *Historical Tales* (*povestiri istorice*) written for children and pupils. Lucian Boia situates these *Tales* in N. Ceauşescu’s cult of personality. See Boia, *History and Myth...*, p. 223. At the same time, Romanian literary critic, Angelo Mitchievici, argued that the *Tales* constructed the prototypical New Romanian fed by historical resentment for “he was always reminded [by Almaş’ *Tales*] that the Turks, Poles, Hungarians, Germans and pretty much everybody else were potential enemies, that his dignity can be gained in war-like manner and that any slaughter if it is for the Nation’s cause is justified. This man of resentment was brought up with a complex of superiority doubled by and interchangeable with one of inferiority...” Almaş was also one of the co-authors of ninth grade Romanian history textbook in 1969. See Angelo Mitchievici, “Poveşti, legende, utopii. Dumitru Almaş la şcoala istoriei”, in Paul Cernat, Ion Manolescu, Angelo Mitchievici, Ioan Stanomir, *Explorări în comunismul românesc*, vol. II (Bucureşti: Polirom, 2005) p. 367.

¹⁹ A. Ōţetea, „Nicolae Iorga...”, *Ibidem*, p. 1222.

²⁰ C. Daicoviciu, „Nicolae Iorga...”, *Ibidem*.

to revitalize a common past of exchange of material and spiritual goods between the inhabitants of a region that always served as a bridge between the West and the East.”²¹ Iorga’s idea of the “New Byzantium” was resurrected: it represented the fundamental civilizational trait of Southeastern Europe that appeared because of the West-East synthesis. According to Eugen Stănescu, the “Byzantine idea” also expressed the reality of political-cultural solidarity and interaction at the time when tremendous, common enemies attacked and subjugated the Balkan peoples. The symbolic geography presupposed by the motif of the Byzantium, via the Balkans, was the primary and foundational premise of the principle of Southeastern European interpenetration, exchange, and communality.²²

The ultimate result of the project of Southeastern European studies and its underlying idea, both before and during communism, was the creation of a new geopolitical unit. It was founded upon a political-epistemic discourse of self-determination and originality. An article from 1944 by V Papacostea excellently summarized the ethos of such an alternative space:

Born at the meeting point between two worlds, the Romanian people succeeded, despite its small numbers, to valiantly preserve its personality. Between two Europes – which ideologies and material interests have clashed for millennia – the Romanian people has shown since ancestral times great understanding of both, isolating their irreducible antinomies, while often being able to reconcile them, as it is obvious from the synthesis that defines the Romanians’ artistic and spiritual creations. But it never allowed itself to be annexed as a periphery by neither Europes.²³

The cultural-epistemic construct of Southeastern Europe presupposed and nourished some of the main motifs of history-production under communism: “the respect for human personality, the

²¹ Em. Condurachi et Virgil Căndea, “Les débuts de l’AIESEE, ouvre de compréhension et d’entente mutuelle par la science”, *Revue des Études Sud-Est Européennes*, tome I, no. 3-4, 1963, pp. 573-577.

²² See Eugen Stănescu’s and Emil Condurachi’s interventions at the International Congress of Byzantine studies in Ohrid (September 1961) in „Congresul internațional de studii bizantine de la Ohrida – Septembrie 1961”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 2, an XV, 1962, pp. 187-192.

²³ This piece was originally meant for a new review entitled *Le monde balkanique*, which never came to life. The article will be published by Cornelia Papacostea-Danielopolu (the historian’s daughter) and Nicolae-Șerban Tanașoca in *Revue des Études Sud-Est Européennes*, tome XXII, no. 3, 1984, pp. 229-232. See Tanașoca, *Balkanologie și politică...*, p. 197.

love for freedom, the sense of balance as a basis for democracy, an equalitarian and tolerant spirit, or cultural comprehension.”²⁴ The historiographically constructed utopias from the inter-war period designed to counteract the image of the Balkans as the “powder keg of Europe” and to by-pass great powers’ foreign policy overlapped with those that resulted from the communist regime’s need to emancipate itself from the West-East divide. As early as 1962, the congresses of Southeastern European studies were opportunities to boast “the Romanian people’s accomplishments during his struggle and labor in the years of popular power.” These international events were occasions to demonstrate “the international prestige enjoyed by Romania today.” This concerned “the progress of Romanian science in various and numerous fields, as well as the political and economic successes that transformed our country from a backward, agrarian one into a continuously developing country with a powerful industry that is currently an element of authority in international politics.”²⁵ The narrative of exceptional ability, accomplishment, and relevance were intrinsically linked to the project of Southeastern Europe studies.

3. The Institute for Romanian-Soviet Studies

Another chronology relevant for the genealogy of the shifting attitudes of the communist regime both domestically, regarding the politics of science, and internationally, in relation to the Moscow center, is that of the fate of the IRSS. This institute was created in 1947; by 1950 it was

²⁴ Zub, *Istorie și istorici...*, p. 207. This book was published at the end of the communist regime in Romania. As a sign of the extraordinary wave of inter-war rehabilitations at the time, it is interesting to note that Zub supports his interpretation of the Southeastern European project with a quote from Al. Randa, none other than Horia Sima’s (the leader of the Iron Guard after Corneliu Zelea Codreanu’s assassination) diplomatic attaché in Berlin, in the latter’s government created in Vienna toward the end of the Second World War. According to Randa, as quoted by Zub, „Southeastern Europe is a unity vertebrated by the Balkans and centered on the Carpathian-Danubian space.” The encoding of geopolitical dominance is obvious.

²⁵ Em. Condurachi și Eugen Stănescu, „Conferința Internațională de Studii Sud-Est Europene de la München (noiembrie 1962)”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 2, an XVI, 1963, pp.449.

attached to the RPR Academy. As its name indicates, it was one of the vehicles of exporting Soviet science and of popularizing Marxism-Leninism in Romania. Its main activities were the translation of Soviet academic journals and academic books into Romanian and the organization of conferences on the Soviet Union's progress in the scientific front. However, by 1956, the DPC reports on its activity noted that IRSS had focused mainly on responsibilities of documentation, overlooking those of research. At the same time, the DPC aimed at a synchronization between the IRSS's products and the domestic developments in science. To make matters worse, the IRSS' activity often overlapped with institutions of similar profile, such as the Romanian-Russian Museum, the Lenin-Stalin Museum, "Cartea Rusa" publishing house, or even the "Maxim Gorki" institute. Moreover, as shown in the previous chapters, in the second half of the fifties, both within the Academy and in party circles there was an increasing tendency toward expanding the scope of international exchange, beyond the Soviet-Romanian, core-periphery arithmetic of epistemic import.²⁶

Between 1956 and 1957, the DPC in collaboration with the Presidium of the Academy advanced a project for IRSS' reform. A section of it, of smaller scale (15 to 20 positions), was created within the Academy and its main objective was that of researching the Romanian-Soviet scientific relations. The other part, the one focused on documentation and publication of Soviet scholarly output was supposed to be merged into a special institute for scientific information that encompassed epistemic production *across* the world.²⁷ The latter office will be created only in the mid-sixties as the Center for Scientific Documentation (CSD). It had two sections: for natural

²⁶ For the IRSS' activities before 1956 see „Scurtă informare privind activitatea Academiei RPR în anul 1953 și planul pe anul 1954”, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.3/1954, f.51. “Dare de seamă asupra activității științifice a Academiei RPR pe anul 1954”, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.24/1955, f. 49, „Notă informativă privind unele aspecte ale activității Academiei RPR”, 28 aprilie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.64/1955, f. 10.

²⁷ „Referat cu privire la activitatea Institutului de Studii Romano-Sovietic al Academiei RPR”, 23 aprilie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.17/1956, f. 65.

sciences and social sciences. It produced a monthly bulletin that contained summaries of articles published in academic journals. One series was in Russian, the other in English. By 1965, the first appeared up to the eleventh issues, while the second up to the sixth (because of difficulties in translation). Around the same time, the CSD had 152 employees, of which 57 were specialists on the various fields covered by the Center.²⁸

The ultimate assimilation of the IRSS' sections either in various Academy institutes (in our case, the universal history section of the History Institute in Bucharest) or in the CSD was anticipated by its gradual institutional decline. For example, at the end of 1958, the Academy's publishing house was granted two locations that used to belong to the IRSS.²⁹ By 1963, the same year when the Institute for Southeastern European Studies was founded, the DPC deemed the IRSS' activity "utterly unsatisfactory considering the material basis upon which it functions." The DPC basically reached the conclusion that the IRSS was not worth the money it got and that it did not respond to the contemporary needs of the scientific front. The IRSS, in order to fulfill its publication quota, "undiscriminately printed material, regardless of its utility, and articles that are of no interest for domestic academic research." The conclusion of the DPC report was blunt and unambiguous:

taking into account the fact that the rhythm and the proportions of current scientific research in the world require the multilateral organization of scholarly documentation, we propose the creation of a Center for Scientific Documentation affiliated to the RPR Academy. This body will take over the IRSS' task for academic information. It will also give scientists the possibility to consult materials coming *both* from socialist and capitalist countries.³⁰

²⁸ „Informare cu privire la activitatea Centrului de Documentare științifică al Academiei RPR”, 15 februarie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.7/1965, ff. 57-62.

²⁹ „Informare cu privire la unele probleme ale Editurii Academiei RPR”, 8 decembrie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.3/1958, ff. 208-205.

³⁰ „Referat privind reprofilarea Institutului de studii româno-sovietic”, 9 septembrie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.9/1963, ff. 21-26.

In 1963, all of the structures created with the purpose of exporting and publicizing in Romania the progresses and novelties of Soviet science and culture, including the IRSS, were either disbanded or merged into larger national structures. As we shall see below, this decision was part and parcel of a process of consolidating the national scientific front in the context of pressures from the Moscow center for further scientific and cultural intra-bloc integration. It was also a by-product of the shifting interest of the RWP in matters of epistemic import. Gheorghiu-Dej's speech at the Bucharest party organization in February 1964 clearly expressed this modified geographic interest in the foreign policy of expert knowledge and cultural exchange:

As experience clearly demonstrated, the shortest and most efficient path to endowing our industry with new technology is the assimilation of machines and tools on the basis of acquiring technical documentation and licenses of production for the most developed types existent in the world. It is senseless to strive for 'originality by any means' [...] We will avoid wasting time, energy, and money in order to invent things that have been already invented, in order to seek for solutions to problems that have been already solved. [Furthermore,] we must do everything necessary so that in the future the great works of other literatures will much wider available to our readers [...] we give the masses of readers the treasures of universal culture, thus continuously broadening their tastes and horizons.³¹

8. The International Association for the Study of Southeastern European Studies

Before pursuing the topic of socialist international integration in science, I would like to return to the Institute for Southeastern European Studies (ISEES). The chronology of its re-founding was the mirror-image of the IRSS's demise. The gestation period of the ISEES follows two directions. A more informal one that is related to Victor Papacostea's efforts to found an Institute of Balkan studies. And a more official and visible one that can be traced to the succession of international conference that Romanian historians participated in (as both speakers and organizers) and which led to the creation of the IASEES (1963). Benefiting from the backing of important members of the Academy, i.e., officials of the scientific field, such the linguists

³¹ "Cuvântarea tovarășului Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej la conferința organizației de partid a orașului București", *Scînteia*, nr. 6169, 16 februarie 1964.

Alexandru Rosetti and Iorgu Iordan, sociologist Mihail Ralea, historians A. Oțetea and M. Berza, Papacostea began a campaign of petitions to the highest levels of higher-education and research in communist Romania, pleading for the re-founding of an Institute for Balkan Studies (IBS). Before his untimely death in 1962, he did manage to obtain promises for the re-starting of the academic review *Balcania*, a journal of which editor-in-chief he used to be before 1947. Nevertheless, Papacostea was seen with distrust, particularly by the Securitate, being identified as a potentially “destabilizing element”. In one of the documents found by historian Nicolae-Șerban Tanașoca, a Securitate collaborator who was member of the Academy himself [unnamed by the author], characterized Papacostea’s project as follows:

[in the past] The Institute for Balkan Studies and Research and *Balcania* approached inter-Balkan relations from a philosophical, historical, and political conception that was anti-scientific and anti-Marxist. It was not focused on establishing historical truth but it promoted the idea of a Balkan federation. [...] This note wishes to point to the fact that one needs to approach with extreme ideological vigilance the materials that will be published in *Balcania* and the works that will be elaborated by the future IBS in order to avoid the resurgence of these old viewpoints. [...] The scientific tasks of studying Balkan problems cannot be dis-attached, not for a single moment, from political-ideological requirements of our country’s struggle; the former must always be subordinated to the latter.

In his closing remarks, the informer advised that the party organs intervened in order to make sure that Papostea’s project, which was seen as rather unclear, confused, and slippery, would be guided into a direction that ensured that both the journal and the institute served the goals of the regime’s politics of science and foreign diplomacy.³²

Indeed, Papacostea argued at the end of the Second World War that the national solution of the Versailles system failed in the Balkans and proposed a federation. Considering that around the same time Tito advocated the idea of a communist federation in the Balkans (1945-1948), the

³² Tanașoca, *Balcanologie și politică...*, pp. 84-86. The Securitate documents also contain statements by V. Papacostea in which he, just like S. Dragomir, I Nestor, C. C. Giurescu, Gh. Zane, and other historians recuperated after 1955, attempted to prove that he internalized the values of the communist regime, that he is “reformed”. Moreover, one of his referents, Emil Petrovici, tried to show that he had been favorable to the regime as early as 1945.

federative principle was approached with deep suspicion by the RWP in the context of its turn to self-centeredness and autochthonousness under pressure from the Soviet hegemon. The very idea of a non-national solution in the Balkans ran counter with the party line. And, unsurprisingly, the RWP and Romanian historians followed a different direction – the Southeastern European idea, which simultaneously gave regional weight to the RWP's foreign affairs and scientific policies and allowed the continuation of a nationalist line in the historical narrative. The differences of perception over the role of such a project of an alternative geography of science was also proved by the insertion of topics of modern and contemporary history on the academic agenda of the institute. One of the documents found by Nicolae-Șerban Tanașoca in Papacostea's Securitate file made the following two recommendations: a) following the model of the Soviet Academy's institutes, experts in problems of contemporary history should be added to group of archeologists, historians, or linguists already proposed; b) there had to be a correct combination between old cadres (i.e., "have-beens") and young specialists who were party members.³³ As the proceedings of the First Congress of Balkan Studies showed, various contemporary topics were picked up, such as the situation after the First World War, the Balkan Alliance, the antifascist movement, etc. It should not be forgotten that the personality of Nicolae Titulescu already figured prominently in most of historical and political discourse on the contemporary history of Southeastern Europe. On the long run, however, contemporary history did not hold a dominant position in the publication plans of ISEES's journal *Revue des Études Sud-Est Européennes*.

The first official, international contacts regarding the possibility of creating ISEES and IASEES, under the tutelage of UNESCO, were established at the latter's session in 1960 in Paris. In 1961, these initial steps were taken further during the proceedings of the International

³³ *Ibidem*, p. 26.

Congress of Byzantine Studies at Ohrid (Yugoslavia). The group of historians who participated at this event will constitute the core of those who coordinated the Southeastern European studies project. All of them represented the top echelons of the historical front, already deeply involved in the most important historiographical endeavors under the communist regime: Em Condurachi, E. Stănescu, D. M. Pippidi. Later M. Berza and V Căndeș will join this group. The next stage on the path to founding the ISEES was the International Colloquium on Balkan Civilizations that took place in Sinaia (July 1962). The event was opened by the RPR Academy, Athanasie Joja, who was also President of the Romanian Commission for UNESCO. N. Bămmate delivered a welcome address as representative of the UNESCO's general director. The conference had two main themes: unity and diversity among Balkan civilizations; and, the contribution of the Balkan world between Orient and Occident. At the end, the participants decided to create a provisional committee that would coordinate efforts to institutionalize international cooperation on Balkan studies. Its Romanian members were T. Vianu (who was general secretary of UNESCO National Commission) and Em Condurachi (who before 1947 was Papacostea's deputy at *Balcania* and at the IBSR). Vianu, a member of the Romanian Academy, was also the president of this provisional committee. Earlier that summer, the Academy's Section of Historical Sciences decided to create the RPR's Association for Byzantine Studies. Its honorary director was N. Bănescu, none other than one of the former directors of Iorga's Institute for Southeastern European Studies. The Association's president was V. Grecu³⁴, vice-presidents M. Berza, Em.

³⁴ Until 1938, Vasile Grecu taught Southeastern European and Byzantine studies at the Cernăuți University. He will then come to Bucharest to replace Demosthene Russo, the mentor of the New School historians. Grecu made a name for himself under communism by coordinating the publication of early modern legal codices. He was a standing member of the Romanian Academy since 1936. In 1971, Grecu was the chair of the International Congress of Byzantine Studies that was organized in Bucharest.

Condurachi, and Al. Elian, and general secretary was E. Stănescu.³⁵ Later that year, a Romanian delegation, led by Constantin Daicoviciu, the president of Academy's Section of Historian Sciences, participated at the International Conference of Southeastern European Studies in Munich (November 1962). An interesting side-note: the vice-president of the RPR's State Bank, economist Emeric Deutsch was also present. Again, the principle of international collaboration on this specific area studies was emphasized. In quick succession, the gathering in Munich was followed, in April 1963, by the meeting in Athens of the Committee of the International Association for Byzantine Studies. Romania was represented by Em. Condurachi and E. Stănescu.³⁶

Ultimately, the International Association for Southeastern European Studies was created in April 1963. The same year, the ISEES was founded in Romania. Its director was M. Berza. The IASEES Secretariat was located at the same address with the IASEES. The latter was funded by UNESCO and by the International Council for human and philosophical sciences, while the Secretariat by the RPR Academy.³⁷ Under the circumstances, the Romanian side had achieved a central role in this international project, confirming the historical front's, party endorsed, orientation toward an alternative geographical space that reinforced the prestige and regional influence of the regime and of the local epistemic community. As recognition of V Papacostea's contribution to the creation of the ISEES, his name appear on the editorial board of the *Revue des Études Sud-Est Européennes*. He will also officially remain among the institute's founding

³⁵ „Constituirea Asociației de Studii Bizantine din RPR”, in *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 5, an XV, 1962, pp. 1007-1008.

³⁶ Em. Condurachi and E. Stănescu, „Reuniunea Comitetului Asociației internaționale de studii bizantine (Atena – 16-18 aprilie 1963)”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, 3, an XVI, 1963, pp. 703-706.

³⁷ Em. Condurachi and E. Stănescu, „Noi manifestări ale colaborării științifice sud-est europene”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, nr.3, anul XVII, 1964, pp. 626-628.

fathers, along with N Iorga and V Pârvan.³⁸ The ISEES was fundamentally build on the principle of interdisciplinarity: “[the institute] will include in its area of study alongside research on history and culture, problems of linguistics and ethnography, but also those arising from the social structures of this region’s peoples, their economic development and judicial system..”³⁹

Nevertheless, at the core of the international project of Southeastern European studies lay an inherent ambiguity. Since 1947, because of obvious reasons, no such collaboration existed either regionally or at the European level. At the same time, the new initiative coincided with a surge toward better crystallization of regime national identities throughout the Balkans. Under the circumstances, discourses of similarity coexisted, and often times were subordinated, to those of particularity. Em Condurachi, at the 1962 Sinaia colloquium, noted this tension, but emphasized that the condition of communality constituted the underlying feature of the region’s history:

The historical studies of the last 15 years, in our country as well as in others, have above all underlined the opposing characteristics of our common traditions and neglected, forgotten even, those which for centuries have shown our peoples’ unitary struggle and heritage. Therefore, the moment has arrived to submit to novel, calm, and profound analyses the present condition of the studies on the history of Southeast European culture and the perspectives of scientific collaboration that contrary to disagreements of late did not cease to remain a *sine qua non* of our common progress.⁴⁰

However, the first Congress of Balkan Studies, which took place in Sofia in August 1966, showed that countries in the region found it difficult to cope with what Maria Todorova called in her classical study, the “in-betweeness of the Balkans, their transitional character.”⁴¹ For example, in the case of Romania, historians had to deal with at least three challenges raised by this alternative geography: first, the country’s position in the region in the context of the Soviet

³⁸ See his obituary Mircea Voicana, “Victor Papacostea”, *Revue des Études Sud-Est Européennes*, tome I, no. 1-2, 1963, pp. 179-181.

³⁹ Avant-Propos”, *Revue des Études Sud-Est Européennes*, tome I, no. 1-2, 1963, pp. 5-6.

⁴⁰ Em. Condurachi, “Le colloque international de Sinaia...”, *Ibidem*, p. 169.

⁴¹ Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), pp. 17-18 and pp. 57-58.

bloc dynamics; second, its role as self-perceived “transmission belt” between the West and the East; third, the historically constructed national identity in the symbolic economy of Southeastern European peoples (the role of the autochthonous element and successive imperial legacies Roman, Byzantine, Ottoman). The Southeastern European studies project was a complex of two overlapping master-narratives: an essentializing one, which focused on the national to the expense of the regional that experienced a “discursive hardening” (E. Said) when the scholarly endeavor overlapped with the political objectives. And, it was also what I. Neumann labeled an “as if” story, which “stressed that different ethnic groups had “always” lived together peacefully and that a splitting up of the community along ethnic lines would be a break with ‘tradition’.”⁴² Indeed, at the foundation of the Southeastern European studies project laid the belief (formal for some, sincere for others) in the ability of those involved (individuals or countries) to transverse national identity bounded contexts:

Above the divergences or the differences engendered by the economic, political and social evolution of each people living in this region, a building block for Oriental Europe [*placă turnantă*], there are and will always be a multitude of traditions and common objectives that are part of our common past, that make us consider with confidence this necessity, the objective in itself, to live and work together.⁴³

Among Romanian historians the tensions inherited from N. Iorga’s initial understanding of Southeastern Europe played into the insecurities and thematic obsessions of an epistemic community that ‘empancipated’ itself professionally via re-gaining the right to write in a national key about the country’s history. For example, C. Daicoviciu, attempting to assess the position of the autochthonous population in the region during ancient history, reached the following conclusion: “because of its high level of material and spiritual civilization which the Dacians had reached, Decebalus [one of their kings], the epitome of ‘free barbarians’, is more than a

⁴² Iver B. Neumann, *Uses of the Other: "The East" in European Identity Formation* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), pp. 215-216.

⁴³ Em. Condurachi, “Le colloque international de Sinaia...”, *Ibidem*, p. 171.

‘barbarian’. His position is that of ‘a middle man between true barbarians and Greek-Roman culture’ [this last phrase belongs to N. Iorga, n.a.]”⁴⁴ Such statement brings together several levels of symbolic appropriation: the self-perception of being at the crossroads of civilizational contacts; the resulting exceptionality of in-betweenness; and, the incurring regional supremacy.

4. The First International Congress of Balkan Studies

The First Congress of Balkan Studies in 1966 was the stage where the contradictions of the Southeastern European studies project came to the fore. According to Bulgarian historian Ivan Elenkov, the organizational concept of the congress as set up by the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party was a synthesis of scholarly and political tasks:

a) the congress must confirm the practice of the BCP policy of peaceful understanding; b) it must present Bulgaria well as the host of the initiative; c) Bulgarian scholars must take the initiative in this new scientific field so that Bulgaria will become one of the major centers of world Balkan Studies; d) a dominant position of Marxist thought must be secured at the congress and vestiges of the past and nationalist relapses must not be allowed to be used by the imperialist agents, and e) the congress must establish contacts as a base for further cooperation.⁴⁵

Just like in the case of Romania, in Bulgaria, the project of Balkan cooperation on the realm of historical studies⁴⁶ was structured according to the regime’s foreign policy, in reference to its

⁴⁴ C. Daicoviciu, „Nicolae Iorga și autohtonii”, *Ibidem*, pp. 1231.

⁴⁵ Ivan Elenkov, “The Science of History In Bulgaria in the Age of Socialism: The Problematic Mapping of its Institutional Boundaries”, *CAS Working Papers Series* (Sofia: Center for Advanced Studies, 2007). The section quoted is part of an earlier, larger version of the article that cannot be found in the published version.

⁴⁶ The founder of the concept of Balkan Studies in Bulgaria was N. Todorov, Maria Todorova’s father. In 1964, he created the Institute of Balkan Studies at the Bulgarian Academy of Science. According to Elenkov, Todorov’s main principle, resembling that of his Romanian counterparts, was that “Balkan Studies make up a complex science studying the Balkan community in its socioeconomic, political and cultural relations and the mutual influence of these relations on one another; this is the first well-reasoned concept of interdisciplinary studies in Bulgarian historiography. However, the operational context for this concept closely associated Balkan Studies with topical issues in Bulgarian foreign policy.” See Elenkov, “The Science of History...”, p. 18. Between 1970 and 1972, N. Todorov merged his political and academic responsibilities and interest, as he became director of the Institute for Foreign Policy at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. From 1977 to 1987 he was a member of the presidium of the Fatherland Front, the umbrella organization that brought together a whole range of social organizations under the control of the Communist party. He was twice elected a candidate member of the central committee, in 1981 and in

self-understood ideological mission, and on the basis of scientific prestige. The primary political function of the project was exemplified by the Bulgarian organizers decision to mediate between the Romanian and Soviet delegations. According to Elenkov, “the negotiations between the Romanian and the Soviet historians were preceded by preliminary talks at the highest party and state level between Todor Zhivkov [the leader of the BCP] and Nicolae Ceaușescu.” As consequence, “the passages in V. Maciu’s report for the plenary session, which were regarded as anti-Bulgarian and anti-Soviet and were potentially very likely to prompt a series of anti-Soviet statements, would be edited out.”⁴⁷ The common ground reached by the three parties did not stop the Romanian delegation at the Congress to report on its return home to the DPC that “the Soviet delegation’s contribution was rather shallow, some of their historians did not present the papers or presentations they previously announced, and their participation at the discussions was below expectations. The Soviets gave us the impression of holding serious reservations.”⁴⁸ Domestic, regional, and international clashing agendas fundamentally obstructed and hindered the Southeastern European studies project. They functioned as permanent pressures that fixed the “as if” stories about the Balkan, hindering the potential of these stories to transgress essentializing, conflicting identitarian narratives.

1986. From 1979 to 1982 he was general secretary of UNESCO’s International Information Centre on Balkan History, which was created in Sofia in the aftermath of the 1966 Congress. Similarly to the IASEES Secretariat in Bucharest, it was financed by both UNESCO and the Bulgarian Academy. For more details see his obituary in *The Sunday Times*, October 2, 2003 (<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/comment/obituaries/article1100971.ece>).

⁴⁷ *Idem*.

⁴⁸ „Notă cu privire la unele manifestări științifice internaționale din domeniul științelor sociale și umanistice la care au participat oameni de știință români”, 19 septembrie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no. 9/1966, f. 33. By mid-1960s, the DPC went to great lengths to ensure that scholars, particularly those from the social sciences, provided reports about their involvement in international academic events. Of course, they were also supposed to submit way ahead of departure outlines, if not the whole text, of their contributions at these events. Upon returning home, their reports, if they raised significant problems, could be discussed in special sessions of the respective higher-education and research institutions. See, „Referat privind manifestările științifice cu participare internațională organizate de Academia RPR și participarea oamenilor de știință români la diferite manifestări științifice internaționale”, 3 august, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.34/1965, ff. 1-11.

The Romanian delegation at the 1966 Congress of Balkan studies had forty-eight members and presented sixty-six reports, 11 percent of the total of reports at the event.⁴⁹ A sign of the Romanians' central role in this project of international collaboration, four historians were members of the presidium of the Congress (C Daicoviciu, E Condurachi, M Berza, V Căndea). At the opening session, Daicoviciu was the third speaker, after Bulgarian communist leader Teodor Jivkov and Rene Maheu, UNESCO's general director. Nevertheless, the report to the DCP of the delegation maintained that its main contribution at the event was "obtaining new adhesions to the points of view of Romanian historiography. Significant in this case is the fact that some authors, confronted with the scientific arguments of the Romanians, renounced their opinions regarding our country which were in contradiction with historical truth."⁵⁰ The militantly national tone characterized all accounts made by Romanian historians, both internally and publicly, about various international academic events they took part in from early sixties onwards. On the one hand, this approach was expressive of the resurgence of national history on the historical front. On the other hand, it was the result of the epistemic community's adjustment to the party lingo and priorities in the realm of both foreign policy and planned science. The scholarly proselytism for the national cause, complemented by the constant boasting of the accomplishments of the communist regime, was a means of extolling *the utility* of history as science. It was happening at a time when the RWP/RCP emphasized more and more the connection between fundamental research and its practical applications.

The main topics analyzed by the members of the Romanian delegation were:

⁴⁹ The balance sheet of the Romanian delegation at the Congress was of one report, seven co-reports, fifty-eight presentations, and over one hundred interventions during the discussion. Another interesting development, resonating internal changes taking place in the domestic system of planned science, was the inclusion in the delegation of a significant number of young researchers that accompanied the doyens of the historical front.

⁵⁰ „Notă cu privire la unele manifestări științifice internaționale...”, *ibidem*, ff. 16-18.

The role of the Dacians and of the other peoples in the Southeastern European history, the problem of the area of the formation the Romanian language and people, the movements of national liberation in the Balkans and on Romania's territory; the working-class and social-democratic movement in Romania and its relations with the working-class movement in the Balkans; the development of Romanian culture and the cultural relations with other peoples; the common traits of the popular culture of Southeastern European peoples; regional political alliances (the Small Entente and the Balkan Alliance); the political and diplomatic relations at the beginning and during the Second World War: the antifascist resistance: and, some of the problems posed by present economic development in Southeastern European countries⁵¹

With very few exceptions the listed topics represented pretexts for talking about national history, rather than pursuing genuine comparative approaches about common experiences in the Balkans. This was an expression of the parochialism that was re-developing in Romanian historiography at the beginning of the sixties, as both its prestige and administrative standing was based on the rekindling of the “national idea” under Stalinism. In analyzing the constants of historical writing in Southeastern Europe, particularly the gradual moving away from the Ottoman legacy, Maria Todorova made a judicious observation:

In this effort the mutual enmity of Balkan historiographies, which developed into a passionate polemical tradition, very often overshadowed even the hostility against the Ottoman Empire and Turkey. At the same time, for all the stereotypes about virulent Balkan nationalism, most Balkan nationalisms are essentially defensive, and their intensity is the direct result of problems of unconsolidated nation-states and social identities in crisis. This nervousness about identity accounts, among others, for the unique preoccupation with ethnogenesis in the Balkans.⁵²

A brief analysis of some of the contending issues at Congress signaled out by the Romanian historians' report to the DPC confirms Todorova's thesis. For example, linguist Emil Petrovici argued that it was incorrect to consider that the “Balkan” features of the Romanian language came from the Thracian substratum. According to him (and in continuation to the point made in the first volume of *Tratatul Istoria României*), these were characteristics originating in “popular Latin”. Of course, such a point came to reinforce the image of Romania as a Latin island in the Orient. Another topic valiantly countered by Romanian historians was the

⁵¹ *Ibidem*, ff. 27-28.

⁵² Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*..., p. 183.

immigrationist thesis, as they seemingly convinced of the contrary a Bulgarian historian, who claimed that Romanian shepherders had existed North of Danube, in the Carpathians, since ancient times, rather than simply moving there under pressure from Turks. But, instances of defending the national cause appeared also in relation to more recent history. N. Fotino, criticizing a Bulgarian colleague, defended the historical rights of Romanian over Dobruja in 1918. Also, E. Campus and D. Țuțu stood their ground in defending the activity of the Small Entente and the Balkan Alliance despite negative evaluations from other delegations.

Most likely to the satisfaction of the Romanian delegation (one must not forget that the RWP was already gathering a significant file on this subject, even raising it during its behind the scenes clashes with the CPSU), Stephen Fischer-Galați and John Campbell brought up the topic of the Nazi-Soviet Pact of August 1939 and its secret clause that allowed the Soviet Union to invade half of Poland, the Baltic countries, Northern Bucovina, and Bessarabia. The report to the DPC made the following remark: “the Romanian delegation did not intervene in this controversy between American and Soviet historians.”⁵³ But the lesson had been already internalized. For example, in 1965, an article about “anti-Hitlerism” and Iorga’s role at the end of the 1930s listed, though arguably in an Aesopian manner, among the factors that led to Marshall Antonescu’s military dictatorship “Romania’s allocation to the German sphere of interest as prescribed by Great Powers agreements and the beginning of the gradual dismemberment of the country on the basis of various treaties.” According to the author this situation inevitably led in September 1940 to establishment of a “military fascist dictatorship.”⁵⁴ In more direct fashion, but for internal use only, a report about the Budapest conference “Danubian Europe from Munich to the

⁵³ „Notă cu privire la unele manifestări științifice internaționale...”, *Ibidem*, ff. 29-31

⁵⁴ Titu Georgescu, „Nicolae Iorga împotriva hitlerismului”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, „25 de ani de la moartea lui Nicolae Iorga”, nr.5, anul XVIII, 1965, pp. 1433.

end of the Second World War” (October 1966) contradicted the Soviet position at the event, according to which the government in Moscow “tried to warn the Germans dangers that came about the latter country’s policy of aggression”. The Romanian position was that “these statements are not confirmed by the secret clause of the Soviet-German Non-Aggression pact in August 23, 1939.”⁵⁵

At the end of the First International Congress of Balkan Studies, N. Todorov argued that the political goals of the event had been fulfilled “not by means of demonstrations or bare propaganda, but by means of the constructive power of science.”⁵⁶ This statement excellently summarized the ambiguities and inherent contradictions at the core of the project of Southeastern European studies: it was part and parcel of the policy of scientific, ideological, and political export of communist regimes, while it did pursue, based on an established tradition, comparative and interdisciplinary research. The epistemic premises of this project, themselves bearing the burden of parochialism, were secondary to the foreign offensive of the Romanian communist regime toward amassing prestige and confirming authenticity. Ultimately, Southeastern Europe proved to be more of an alternative geography for confirming an insecure systemic and national identity, rather than a space for alternative approaches to historical studies.⁵⁷ In the mid-sixties, the most important initiative of international collaboration within this project was on the subject

⁵⁵ „Informare cu privire la Colocviul de istorie de la Budapesta”, 21 septembrie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, 15/1966, ff. 116.

⁵⁶ Elenkov, “The Science of History In Bulgaria...”

⁵⁷ This last aspect of the project of Southeastern European studies should not be dismissed though. As some authors have already shown for the Romanian case, the ISEES was a place of methodological and theoretical innovation. Among others, it was the venue through which the literature of *Annales* school (re-)entered in Romania. For example, a turning point for the dissemination of the *Annales* school agenda was the colloquium organized by Berza at Bucharest in 1969 when some of the most important members of the *Annales*’ the third generation participated: Alphonse Dupront, George Duby, Pierre Chaunu, François Furet. See Silviu Hariton, “Beyond National History: The Reception of *Annales* in Romania”, conference paper presented at *Representations of the Past: The Writing of National Histories in 19th and 20th-Century Europe*, NHIST Summer School, Kőszeg, Hungary, 30 June- 6 July 2008. On the relationship between the *Annales* school and Romanian schools of history and sociology before and during communism see Henri H. Stahl, *Istoria și sociologia. Nicolae Iorga și Dimitrie Gusti* (Paris/Bucarest: Sociétés Européennes, 2000).

“Southeastern Europe and the Enlightenment”. It was coordinated by a special commission chaired by the M. Berza within the IASEE.⁵⁸

Nevertheless, Romania, along with Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, and Albania did successfully appropriate the ‘Balkans’ as a symbolic area of formal (and sometimes substantial academically) cooperation for “the development of friendly relations and the improvement of the political climate in the region of Europe”, regardless of the type of social order.⁵⁹ By acquiring the ‘Balkans’ for self-characterization and mutual discovery, none of these countries was ‘balkanized’ (in Maria Todorova’s sense) during communism. In fact, throughout this period, as Todorova herself remarked, “the Balkans as a geopolitical notion and “Balkan” as a derogation were conspicuously absent from the vocabulary of Western journalists and politicians.”⁶⁰

5. Rejecting Central Europe

One alternative cultural-historical space that was rejected by the historical front in Romania was that of the former Habsburg Empire, more precisely its Austrian-Hungarian avatar. In mid-sixties, in the context of the attempts of strengthening Comecon (some of them initiatives came from the quarter of the communist parties of Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary), a series of international conference advocated the viability of a federal solution for the former dualist state, as contrasted with the Versailles receipt of unitary, self-proclaimed homogeneous nation-states. Considering that since the second half of the 1950s, the RWP decreed, in

⁵⁸ In contrast, projects such as “Romanian-Russian literary relations” or “Literary and cultural relations between Romanians and Hungarians” fell apart as both ‘partner peoples’ increasingly became Others in both the political and historical discourse. „Informare asupra unor probleme privind colaborarea științifică a Academiei RPR cu instituții similare din țările socialiste (1959-1965)”, 31 mai, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.7/1965, ff. 128-135.

⁵⁹ „Expunerea tov. Nicolae Ceaușescu, secretar general al CC al PCR la adunarea festivă cu prilejul aniversării a 45 de ani de la crearea Partidului Comunist Român”, 7 mai, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, 29/1966, f. 87.

⁶⁰ Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans...*, p. 136.

agreement with historians, that Transylvanian history was necessarily Romanian history and that the most important events happened pretty much in the same way and in a unified manner in all Romanian territories, the federative alternative of the Hapsburg Empire was deemed unacceptable. To make matters worse, one of the theses for the explanation of the unification of the Romanian Kingdom with Transylvania was the favorable impetus created by the revolutionary movement in Austria-Hungary (along of course with the Bolshevik October 1917 revolution).

Two additional factors were associated to this debate: the coordinator of the counter-campaign on the Romanian side was Miron Constantinescu, who, as already discussed, was directly connected to the communist party national line in history-production. The timeframe of this debate (1963-1968) corresponded with his political resurrection. It is safe to assume that his contribution to 'defending the national cause' helped him in re-gaining the trust of the party leaders. The second factor was that this debate, at least at a scholarly level, most likely contributed significantly to fact that the Romanian side lost out on the resurgence of Central Europe as a symbolic, cultural space opposed to the Soviet-controlled, undemocratic Eastern Europe. It was no coincidence, in my opinion, that on the Hungarian side, the historians involved in the debate of the mid-sixties (J. Szucs, G Ranki, and P. Hanak) went on to publish, in the 1980s, fundamental essays/articles on the features and specificities of Central Europe as a space of sublimation of the true European values.⁶¹

⁶¹ For example, Jenő Szűcs, "The Three Historic Regions of Europe: An outline," *Acta Historica Scientiarum Hungaricae*, vol. 29 (2-4), 1983, 131-184 or Péter Hának, "Central Europe: A Historical Region in Modern Times: A Contribution to the Debate about the Regions of Europe," George Schöpflin and Nancy Wood, eds., *In Search of Central Europe*, Cambridge, U.K.: Polity Press, 1989, 57-69. In 1981, Gyorgy Ranki received the Hungarian Chair at the University of Indiana in Bloomington (program financed since 1980 by the Hungarian Academy). In April 1985, he organized at Indiana University a conference entitled "Hungary in European Civilization".

Toward the middle of the seventh decade, as the Transylvania question appeared more often than not in inter-party interactions (see the transcript of November-December 1961 Plenum), the historical front and the DPC (along with the RWP/RCP leadership) increasingly got on the same page on the topic of the 1918 unification and the built-up to it (i.e., the Romanians' movement for political rights in the Austrian-Hungarian state⁶²). Internally, the bone of contention on this topic was the nature of the Romanian involvement in the First World War. From 1964 until 1968, the historical front was faced with the paradox of praising the 1918 unification while not being able to celebrate the national participation in the war along with the main political actors involved in the events. An example of how thorny this issue was: a volume about the Alba Iulia gathering in 1918 was in the editorial plan of the Political Publishing House since 1957.⁶³ It will finally be published in 1968 at the Centennial of the event.⁶⁴

The first significant moment of the debate took place in May 1964 at an international conference in Budapest on the demise of the Austrian-Hungarian monarchy. The Romanian delegation was made up of representatives of the highest echelons of the historical front: C. Daicoviciu, A. Oțetea, Șt. Pascu, M. Constantinescu, V. Cheresteșiu, L. Banyai, or N. Fotino (accompanied by other younger researchers). The Romanians were the only ones who sent their papers two weeks ahead to the organizers. Miron Constantinescu, by then head of modern history section of the Academy's History Institute in Bucharest and soon to become deputy minister of Education, presented the report "National Problems in the Austrian-Hungarian Monarchy". A. Oțetea presented a report on the international situation of the monarchy. There were Romanian

⁶² For example see Miron Constantinescu și Georgeta Penelea, „Însemnările din închisoarea de la Seghedin ale doctorului Ioan Rațiu”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, nr.2, anul XVIII, 1965, pp. 353-362.

⁶³ „Stenograma ședinței de analiză a activității Editurii Politice din 22 februarie 1965”, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.15/1965, f. 88.

⁶⁴ Ion Gheorghiu și Constantin Nuțu, *Adunarea națională de la Alba Iulia: 1 decembrie 1918* (București: Editura Politică, 1968).

interventions during the other sections of the conference: on the agrarian question, on the development of financial capital, and on the issue of social-democracy and the working-class movement in the monarchy.

The general theses of the Romanian historians were: the double exploitation - national and economic; the political and cultural discrimination of Romanians; the fundamental and irreducible class antagonisms in the empire; the imperialist foreign policy of the empire which accelerated its unraveling; and, the rejection of the separation between historical and non-historical nations. The main conflict appeared when the director of the History Institute of the Hungarian Academy, Erik Molnar, gave an interview a day before the discussion on the national question, in which he declared that the participants agreed on the fact that the demise of the monarchy had not been a historical necessity and that it could have morphed into a federation. An official complaint was issued by the head of the Romanian delegation, C. Daicoviciu.

In the end, the Romanian historians claimed victory. The account of the conference in *Studii* formulated what would then become an axiom of domestic history-production: the dualist state was confronted by grievous political, economic, social, and national antagonisms that generated the historical process which led to the inevitable dissolution of the monarchy. Lenin was called upon as aide, for the author of the report, Șt. Pascu, invoked his formula “prison of peoples”. Of course, the Romanian presentations and interventions “were acclaimed by the majority of the participants, who acknowledge the correctness of their theses and conclusions.” To drive the Romanian point home, M. Constantinescu had a supplementary intervention in which, in order to prove the historical character of the Nation, he provided a crash course on the history of the Romanians, from ethnogenesis to 1918. At the same time, the Alba Iulia gathering in 1918, which proclaimed the unification of Romanian with Transylvania, was declared a

national constituency with institutional character.⁶⁵ This statement basically de-legitimized the 1918 activity of the National Hungarian Council from Cluj⁶⁶, endowing the Romanians with a constitutional moment in the process of unification. By all means, the federative solution for the former Austro-Hungarian territories was outright rejected.

M. Constantinescu's report was exported to the Twelfth International Congress of Historical Science which took place in Vienna in 1965 (August 29 – September 2 1965). It was even endorsed by the party general secretary, Nicolae Ceaușescu. It was presented at the first section of the congress during the session “Nationalism and Internationalism in the 19th and 20th Centuries”.⁶⁷ This particular part of the Congress was opened by Hans Kohn and the ensuing discussions were the longest of the proceedings. The Romanian report on the topic seems to have had some impact, because its main thesis (inspired by Lenin's principle of self-determination) – “the distinction between legitimate and illegitimate national, that of the dominated and that of the dominant peoples” – is mentioned in Erdmann's history of the International Historical Congresses. Ironically though, the theme of the Hapsburg space as the never realized potential of a united Europe figured prominently at the Congress, according to individual historians' interventions and to the memoirs of the Congress' president, Friedrich Engel-Jones. Indeed, in contrast to Romanian perceptions, Jonas stated that “thanks to its history and geographical location the reconstituted Republic of Austria was called upon to perform a task of *European*

⁶⁵ Șt. Pascu, „Istoricii români la Conferința internațională privind destrămarea monarhiei austro-ungare”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, nr.3, anul XVII, 1964, pp. 621-626. Also see Muller, *Politică și istoriografie...*, pp. 313-314. For details about the positions adopted by the members of the Romanian delegation see C. Daicoviciu și Miron Constantinescu (redactori), *Destrămarea monarhiei austro-ungare 1900-1918. Comunicări prezentate la Conferința istoricilor din 4-9 mai 1964 de la Budapesta* (București: Editura Academiei RPR, 1964).

⁶⁶ For this thesis see L. Banyai, „Din istoricul evenimentelor de după Unirea Transilvaniei cu România”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, nr.3, anul XVII, 1964, pp. 459-478.

⁶⁷ „De la Comitetul Național al istoricilor din RPR”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, nr.1, anul XVII, 1964, pp. 159-160 and „Al XII-lea Congres Internațional de Științe Istorice (Viena, 29 august-2 septembrie 1965)”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, nr.1, anul XVIII, 1965, pp. 179-181. Also see Constantiniu, *De la Roller și Răutu...*, pp. 309-311.

proportions.” [my emphasis] In 1965, in Vienna, it was difficult to escape the specter of Mittleuropa. Especially that, for the first time, at this Congress a significant dose of polycentrism countered the previously pervading dichotomy of Marxist vs. bourgeois historians.⁶⁸

Much more polarized were the proceedings at the Conference on “The National Question in the Hapsburg Monarchy” (April 1966) at University of Indiana in Bloomington, where, since 1958, there existed an influential Russian and East European Institute. The Romanian delegation encompassed again prominent names of the historical front: A Oțetea, V. Maciu, Șt Pascu, and Cornelia Bodea. The last one had become a sort of specialist on the national liberation movement in the second half of the 19th century. Her main thesis was that since the time of 1848 revolution, the Romanians efforts toward political, cultural, and social emancipation had been unitary on the basis of a common national ideology.⁶⁹ So, Bodea’s thesis was practically taking the DPC directives a step further (her approach was anticipated by similar theses in the fourth volume of *Tratatul de Istorie a României*), responding to what I will later describe as the surge, both political and epistemic, to a unitary vision of the Nation across history.

In Bloomington, the main topic was again the possibility of a multinational, federative state as successor to the dualist monarchy. The centrality of subject in the economy of the regime’s politics of history is demonstrated by the fact that the report for the DPC was approved by its head Manea Mănescu (chief of the Sector for Science and Art in 1965) and brought to the attention of the RCP leader, Nicolae Ceaușescu. The document identified a number of historians who “had held unjust opinions regarding our people’s struggle for national unity”: among the Americans there were St. Fischer-Galați (who would later find a common ground with Romanian historians often visiting the country), J Campbell, V Mamatey along with G Barany and St Deak

⁶⁸ Erdmann, *Toward a Global Community...*, pp. 249-251.

⁶⁹ Stan, *Istorie și politică...*, p. 163 and Boia, *History and Myth...*, p. 141.

(identified “of Hungarian origin”) and from, the Popular Republic of Hungary, G. Ranki and P. Hanak. This group’s contended that, first, “Romanians in Transylvania never manifested the will to unite with Romania. On the contrary they wanted to continue their existence within the borders of the Hapsburg empire”. There was a set of reasons supporting this argument:

the relations between the three Romanian states were generally weak and there was no economic unity (St. Deak and G. Ranki); the economic situation of the masses in Romania was more difficult than that of those in Transylvania, the 1907 peasant rebellion being given as example (Ranki and J. Campbell); Transylvania was more developed than Munteania and Moldova (Ranki and Fischer-Galați); the tendencies toward unity with Romania existed only within a small circle of intellectuals and not among the larger population (Fischer-Galați, J. Campbell, St. Deak); the intentions for national unification on the part of the Romanians in Transylvania cannot be noticed on the basis of the claims they made in their programs of emancipation (St. Deak)

The second thesis of the ‘contrarians’ to the Romanian position was that “the peace treaties from 1919 and 1921 did not establish in the rightful frontiers of the successor states of the former Hapsburg empire.” The arguments supporting this theory were: “the peace treaties that led to the dissolution of the Hapsburg empire had an imperialist character (Rudnytski); the Entente did not pay enough attention to border question, drawing them incorrectly, thus providing motives for later developments of Hungarian revisionism (Mamatey).”⁷⁰ However, it should be noted that the members of the Romanian delegation had been informed ahead of time about the contents of the materials that were to be presented at the conference. Therefore, its members “had prepared thoroughly.”

The main text of the Romanian side was the report “Romanians and the National Question in the Hapsburg Monarchy,” which “countered with arguments the subjective (*tendențioase*) theses” of these historians. The bulk of the response was what by now had become a mantra of the ‘national cause’ on the historical front:

⁷⁰ „Informare privind conferința Problema națională în monarhia habsburgică organizată în SUA (Bloomington) la începutul lunii aprilie a.c.”, 22 aprilie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no. 9/1966, f. 10-11.

the Romanian people, within its ethnic borders on either side of the Carpathians, maintained its essential features that created across history an uninterrupted cultural community: common origin, language, habits, traditions, and faith. These common elements were supplemented by the economic unity existent since ancestral times. All these generated a state of mind that determined one emissary of the Polish exile to remark in 1838 that ‘the idea of the unifications of all populations (Romanian) under one scepter preoccupies everybody.’ [...] It was shown that the cultural unity of the Romanians was accomplished completely by the end of the 19th century and thus preceded their political unity. [...] The great impact of the Principalities’ Unity in 1859 among Transylvanian Romanians was also mentioned [...] References to the Romanians’ solidarity during the war of independence, in 1877-1878, were made [...] The great assembly in Alba-Iulia in 1918 was presented in great detail. The large number of participants present there...gave to the decision of unification with Romania a plebiscitary character. It was demonstrated that the peace treaties that followed only officialized internationally a state of facts that came about from the will of the Romanian masses.⁷¹

These tenets were the result of a gradual process of historiographical-political synthesis that began in 1956. I quoted them at length because with several additions, they will gain axiomatic status in history-production under communism. They officially entered the political discourse of the RCP leadership during the 1918 unification Centennial.

The defensive nature of the Romanians’ national interpretation of the historical period in question can be noticed from the first conclusion of the report: “polemical exchanges appeared only in reference to the situation of the Romanians in the Hapsburg empire. We wish to note that the American historians, who presented papers on the position of the empire’s other nationalities, did not find themselves in disagreement with the papers presented by historians coming from successor states, today socialist.”⁷² This observation could be interpreted as a sign that the national key of the Romanian delegation was most strident of all country-standpoints. This could also be an explanation for the absence of Romanian historians from the special issue of the *Austrian History Yearbook* that published the proceedings of the conference in 1967.⁷³

⁷¹ „Informare privind conferința...”, *Ibidem*, ff. 11-12

⁷² *Idem*, f. 14. One interesting note: Manea Mănescu underlined in red a passage from the report that drew attention at the fact that “historians from the People’s Republic of Hungary sided with some historians from the United States, including those of Hungarian origin, in the attempts to contest the will of the Romanians from the Hapsburg monarchy to unite with those on the other side of the Carpathians.”

⁷³ Unfortunately I did not have the possibility to consult the articles in this special issue in order to verify the account of the Romanian reports and to see if there is any explanation for the absence of Romanian historians among

Ultimately, the report, just like in Budapest, claimed a Romanian victory: misconstruing a quote by Hans Kohn, the author noted that the participants agreed that the collapse of the dualist monarchy was a historical necessity. However, it was also remarked that “though the discussion on the Hapsburg monarchy were considered closed, the history of *Central Europe*, that is approximately the geographical of the former empire, continues to raise great interest on the part of the historians in the US.” [my emphasis]

The 1966 Bloomington Conference ended with the proposal for the creation of an International Association of Central European Studies, on the model of the IASEES. Romanian historians did promise to present this project to RSR Academy. No further action was taken. In contrast to the flurry of Romanian international involvement in the creation and development of the IASEES, the project of Central Europe seems to have generated the opposite reaction. The report recommended that more monographs ought to be produced in order to counter “Hungarian revisionism” and that the RSR Academy had to devise a clear plan of activities for the 1918 Centennial.⁷⁴ Rather than pursuing further integration in Europe by means of an additional project of international cooperation, the Romanian historical front, with the backing of the communist regime, preferred to deepen its self-centeredness. In other words, Central Europe was sacrificed on the altar of the nation-state.

6. Fighting against Socialist International Integration

The third project of alternative geography of science, and maybe the most important one in the arithmetic of the identity games pursued by the communist regime and the scientific front

the contributors. But I did have access to its table of contents. See *Austrian History Yearbook*, Volume 3, Issue 01, January 1967, pp. 1-308.

⁷⁴ „Informare privind conferința...”, *Ibidem*, ff. 14-15.

in Romania, was that of the socialist integration of Comecon Academies. The principles, lingo, and countries involved in the campaign for coordinated planning, unified production efforts, and international division of labor found a counterpart on the realm of culture and science. This phenomenon that received surprisingly little attention from scholarly literature reinforced and favored in Romania the epistemic communities' adherence to communist party line, providing a supplementary source of regime legitimacy. Science not only became national, but it could also claim to have struggled for emancipation, so to speak, in concert with party-state leadership's stand against political hegemony. To put it differently, the RWP's scuffle in the Comecon for economic-political autonomy was directly tied to a similar intra-bloc scramble for cultural-scientific self-centeredness. On May 8th 1964, scientists met to discuss and express their support for the April Declaration. In his conclusions, the president of the Council of Ministers, I. G. Maurer, put together the two phenomena, raising the specter of a total loss of sovereignty, which then functioned as rallying call for many years to come:

I don't want to jump to conclusions: on the one hand, economic integration; on the other hand cultural integration. Of course, there are other fields, besides economy and culture, where leadership is presupposed, but they are very limited. [...] It is not about only economic integration as a reflex to some conditions that manifest themselves in capitalism and which should be developed in socialism. Cultural integration is more than that...what necessity imposes this [cultural] integration? I am not jumping to conclusions. I do not dare. I know what it means to make unfounded accusations, to bring a groundless charge against someone. But there are facts. These facts united with the others cannot be disassociated. They compel you to look at them ever more carefully...

Under the circumstances, nobody can be surprised by the whole-hearted association of the scientific front to the Party's offensive for so-called independence. To exemplify, at a meeting of the Bucharest University's party organization (departments of philology, history, law and foreign languages) summoned, in May 1964, in order to vote a resolution of support for the April

⁷⁵ „Stenograma adunării cu oamenii de știință care au dezbătut Declarația CC al PMR adoptată la Plenara lărgită a CC al PMR din 15-22 aprilie 1964 (8 mai 1964)”, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.31/1964, f. 164.

Declaration, it was reported that archeologist I Nestor, an individual that had been many a times on lists of academicians to be purged or reprimanded for their ‘reactionary’ views, declared: “Only the walls could not endorse such a document.”⁷⁶

In the famous article “The Current Problems of the World Socialist System’s Development” published in *Problems of Peace and Socialism* (September 1962), programmatic for the new Soviet vision of socialist integration, the CPSU General Secretary, Nikita Khrushchev argued that “furthering a multilateral cultural collaboration is one of the most imperative tasks of our present days.”⁷⁷ A year earlier, in 1961, there was a meeting in Moscow with the representatives of the Academies in the Soviet Union, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Mongolia, Poland, and Romania. For the first time, the Soviet representatives put forth the topic of the coordination of socialist countries’ participation at international scientific events. This initiative was complemented by the proposal of the Polish Academy’s representative to inquire into ways of coordinating scientific activity across the socialist camp.⁷⁸

As a consequence, in 1962, the First Convention of Socialist Academies was organized in Warsaw. It brought together representatives from the USSR, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Mongolia, Vietnam, Romania, and, of course, Poland. The main issues debated were the creation of permanent bodies – a Secretariat and a Bureau – that would deal with the coordination of multilateral scientific cooperation and the founding of international research institutes. These ideas materialized in a document drafted by the Polish and Czechoslovak Academies bearing the title “The Fundamental Principles and Forms of Scientific Collaboration

⁷⁶ Elvira Cincă, „Informație privind adunarea organizației de partid de la Universitatea din București (facultățile: filologie, istorie, științe juridice și institutul de limbi străine)”, 23 mai, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.29/1964, f. 14.

⁷⁷ *Apud* „Notă cu privire la tendințele de integrare culturală și științifică”, 7 mai, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.31/1964, f. 28.

⁷⁸ Ion Diclescu, „Informare cu privire la colaborarea multilaterală dintre Academii de știință din unele țări socialiste”, 16 septembrie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.34/1965, f. 22.

among the Countries of the Socialist Camp.” It was also decided that yearly conventions of socialist academies would be convened. They were to be prepared by special meetings of these academies’ offices of foreign relations.⁷⁹

In 1963, the second convention took place in Berlin. Another programmatic document was advanced here: “The Methodology of Designing Long Term Plans Concerning Scientific Research.” Its main tenets were: “the creation of a single body for planning and co-coordinating scientific activity; ...the close co-ordination of the individual academies; long term plans synchronized with the planning of the commissions of scientific collaboration in the Comecon”⁸⁰ The response of the Romanian side will be first formulated at the third such convention. The latter took place in Sofia (April 12-19, 1964), approximately a week before the publication of the RWP April Declaration. The programmatic document here was “The Principles, Forms, and Methods of Multilateral Scientific Collaboration among the Academies of the Socialist States”. The authors were again the academies from Poland and Czechoslovakia. The Vietnam representatives did not make it to the meeting. The Chinese and North Koreans did not honor the invitation, while the Academies of Cuba and Yugoslavia were not invited. The most important theses put forth by this convention were:

the common usage of the scientific and technical potential of socialist countries; the common use of laboratories and installations belonging to various Academies; the creation of intra-bloc scientific collectives and institutes on the basis of existent national institutes that reached on their respective field of science a high methodological and theoretical level and have experienced workers and the necessary technology; the specialization of certain countries in the field of science and technology; the specialization of academic journals on specific fields along with the creation of international editorial boards and the publication of these reviews by the Academy that has the best conditions available in the respective branch and from an economic point of view; the unitary coordination of the specialization of scientific cadres in research subjects; the multilateral coordination of the international scientific events organized by the Academies of the socialist states.⁸¹

⁷⁹ *Idem*, f. 23

⁸⁰ „Notă cu privire la tendințele de integrare culturală și științifică”, *Ibidem*, f. 26.

⁸¹ *Idem*, ff. 26-27.

The Romanian reaction was unambiguous and in accordance with the RWP line regarding Khrushchev's plans for the Comecon. The RPR Academy's representatives rejected all proposals and requested that "The Principle, Forms, and Methods of Multilateral Scientific Collaboration among the Academies of the Socialist States" to be removed from the agenda of the proceedings in Sofia. As a consequence, Ilie Diclescu, head of the DPC's Science and Art Section, noted in a report that, in 1964, "the multilateral collaboration was not extended, being limited only to thematic collaboration on a small number of issue that had been chosen at the previous, periodical meetings of the specialists in those respective fields."⁸²

The Romanian point of view was driven home during the July 1965 meeting of the Academies' foreign affairs offices in Bucharest, in preparation for the fourth Convention of the Representatives of the Academies of the Socialist Countries (December 1965). The document that was to be discussed both in Bucharest and Moscow, "The Principle, Forms, and Methods of Multilateral Scientific Collaboration among the Academies of the Socialist States," was a new, though not significantly different, version of the text the Romanians rejected in Sofia. Therefore, according to a report prepared for Ilie Dinulescu, the representatives of the RPR Academy's office of foreign relations were instructed both in Bucharest and Moscow "to have no initiative regarding the new proposals for multilateral collaboration." All other materials concerning further international scientific integration within the socialist camp were deemed "unacceptable and the RPR Academy proposed their exclusion from the agenda of the Moscow Convention." The Romanian representatives "will disagree with any proposal for supra-state forms of organization in the field of relations among socialist states' Academies. [...] They will accept no decision that would lead to our country being represented by other countries in international

⁸² Diclescu, „Informare cu privire la colaborarea multilaterală...”, *Ibidem*, f. 24.

scientific organizations. The Romanian Academy will reject the project of creating international academic journals.”⁸³

The only alternative accepted by the RPR Academy was that of sectorial collaboration between specific institutes on the basis of bilateral accords and other multilateral agreements focusing on specific research issues signed by this body or by the country within the Comecon. Despite the rather ambitious outlook of the arrangement, in reality, the international collaboration plans of the Academy presupposed mainly scholarly exchanges and specialization residencies. There were only few projects of common research and/or publication. Romanian historians were involved in the following international endeavors (1959-1966): “Studies about Romanian-Bulgarian relations”; “Romanian-Russian relations between the 16th and 17th centuries” (based on Soviet archives); “Oriental sources about the history of Eastern Europe”; “The history of the Great October Socialist Revolution”; the IAEES commission, chaired by M Berza, on the study of Enlightenment. Most of the foreign relations of the RPR/RSR Academy were centered on exporting *domestic* production and on *advertising* the “great accomplishments of Romanian science and culture along with those of the building socialism in the country.”⁸⁴ In the end, the vital priority for the Romanian side in the project of “multilateral international collaboration within the socialist camp” remained that of continuously increasing and advocating the “prestige of national science and of its glorious traditions.”⁸⁵ By 1965, science was irreversibly tied to the principle of Romanian sovereignty. Similarly to the macro-systemic evolution toward increased unity, self-centeredness, autochthonous-*ness* generated by the RWP’s

⁸³ „Referat privind întâlnirea șefilor Oficiilor de relații externe ale Academiei de științe din țările socialiste, ce va avea loc la București în luna iunie a.c.”, 22 iunie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.7/1965, ff. 147-149.

⁸⁴ „Informare asupra unor probleme privind colaborarea științifică a Academiei RPR...”, *Ibidem*, f. 128 and f. 131.

⁸⁵ „Cuvîntarea tovarășului Nicolae Ceaușescu, secretar general al CC al PCR, la lucrările primei ședințe plenare a Consiliului Național al Cercetării Științifice, 14 iulie 1966”, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, 29/1966, ff. 90-96.

reaction to the project of greater Comecon unity, the scientific field too moved toward heightened centralization and planning. This phenomenon was epitomized by the creation in December 1965 of the National Council for Scientific Research, a project that had been discussed and prepared since 1960.

7. Looking to the West and International of Academic Exchange

One last topic I will discuss in reference to the shifting geography of Romanian science is the Academy's growing interest in establishing ties with and learning from the West. Three issues are relevant here: the emphasis placed on academic exchanges and residencies in the non-communist countries; the reform of the institutional structure presupposed by the process of approval for travelling abroad for scholarly purposes; and, the decision to raise the number of foreign members of the Academy. The change of focus within the scientific field concerning international collaboration can be noticed also from a brief survey of the destinations for academic events of researchers affiliated to the Academy. In fact, according to the reports of the DPC's Science and Arts section, the Academy failed to fulfill its plan regarding the organization of international scientific events and to make use of the funding available for scholarships, residences, and exchanges abroad. Between 1961 and 1964, out of fifty seven international conventions that were supposed to be organized by the RPR Academy, only thirty one were convened. During the same period, Romanian scholars participated at 195 events in socialist countries as compared to 168 in capitalist ones (with 304 presentations in the East versus 250 in the West). One hundred and forty-one members of the Academy along with two hundred and twenty-five researchers took part in the various academic meetings in socialist countries. As a counterpart, one hundred and seventy-six members of the Academy and only eighty-nine

researchers participated in similar events in the West.⁸⁶ Until 1965, the policy of the communist regime was to send into ‘the capitalist world’ established scientists, trusted and tried by the party, rather than young experts.

Another field of the RPR Academy’s international cooperation was that of academic specialization and research abroad. These residencies were granted on the basis of the following sources of institutional support: bilateral cultural and scientific agreements; conventions between institutes from various countries; the Academy’s hard currency budget allocated for trips abroad; scholarships offered by various international organizations or by scientific personalities.⁸⁷ Between 1960 and 1964, approximately 350 cadres of the Romanian scientific field travelled outside Romania for this purpose (here the Ministry of Education and the various Universities are included). The Academy contributed with 40 researchers for a total of 230 months. However, none of those who went to socialist countries were sent on the basis of existing bilateral cultural agreements. These grants were used exclusively by the Ministry of Education. Moreover, during the mentioned timeframe, the Academy lost an estimated half of the grants for specialization abroad that it could have accessed. For example, in 1964, only 9 scientists took advantage of these opportunities, out of which 6 were holdovers since 1963. For 1965, out of the available 28 researchers who were to be sent abroad for various types of residencies, only 17 were approved.⁸⁸

⁸⁶ „Referat privind manifestările științifice cu participare internațională organizate de Academia RPR și participarea oamenilor de știință români la diferite manifestări științifice internaționale”, 3 august, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.34/1965, ff. 1-11.

⁸⁷ „Informare privind elaburarea și realizarea planurilor de trimiteri la specializare în străinătate”, 8 iulie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.7/1965, f. 150

⁸⁸ Manea Mănescu, „Referat privind specializarea în străinătate a cercetătorilor din Academia RPR”, 8 martie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.7/1965, ff. 36-40.

This survey points to a rather contradictory situation concerning the possibilities of travelling and researching abroad (both in the East and the West) of Romanian scientists: they existed and were surprisingly numerous, but the scientific field was unable to fully take advantage of them. Of course, one explanation was the unpreparedness of the Academy's management on such matters. Another explanation, however, is related to the system of approving trips abroad. As several DPC reports show, the system was extremely cumbersome, making the procurement of the validating stamps almost a miracle. No less than *nine* commissions or offices had to authorize these proposals for travel abroad; those residencies longer than 3 months went as high as the Central Committee Secretariat. The itinerary was as follows: the proposal came from the institution to which the scientist was affiliated; then it was sent to the Inter-Departmental Commission (created in 1960), which gathered, analyzed, and put forward a preliminary list of approved names to the Government Commission for the Coordination of Travels Abroad. From this governmental commission, the list moved to the Council of Ministers' Commission for Validation, then to the Central Committee Department of Administration (*Direcția Treburi*) and the CC's specialized sections for approval. Afterwards, the names of those hoping to travel abroad reached the CC Secretariat. In parallel with this process, the list was also sent to Commission of Visas of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. After the endorsement of the Secretariat, the names were forwarded to the Governmental Commission for Visas and Passports and to the State Bank. At the same time, upon receiving the validation of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the list went to the Consulate Section of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Leaving aside the Orwellian itinerary of these proposals, what needs to be noted is that

according to this system, it was possible that a decision of the Central Committee's Secretariat could be overturned by the Ministry of Internal Affairs.⁸⁹

The above described system was changed in 1965. The entire activity of obtaining the necessary approvals and visas was taken over by the Governmental Commission for the Coordination of Travel Abroad. This body was enlarged with the addition of the Academy's president and of the minister of Education. All the other commissions were disbanded. According to the new regulations, the itinerary for approval was the following: the scientist's institute sent the proposal to the Governmental Commission that centralized and analyzed all the cases; the Commission also obtained the approval from the Central Committee's sections. In parallel, the institutes sent the proposals the Ministry of Internal Affairs, which then had to inform the Commission on its decision. After the Commission got the list of proposal approved by the Central Committee Secretariat, then it was delivered to the Governmental Commission for Visas and Passport and the State Bank.⁹⁰

The immediate result of this reform was that between 1965 and 1966 there were 42 scientists which benefited from specialization trips, of which 27 were sent to capitalist countries and only 15 to socialist ones. Moreover, the social structure of the group was rather interesting: 13 of them were sons/daughters of workers and peasants, 15 were sons/daughters of intellectuals, while 14 had parents who were administrative employees of the state. Also, of the total of those travelling to the West, only 48 percent were party members, while 52 percent were not.⁹¹ A preliminary conclusion to this data is that by 1965, the criterion of 'social origin' was not anymore the most important one. Even party membership was not a compulsory element for

⁸⁹ „Informare privind elaborarea și realizarea planurilor...”, *Ibidem*, f. 152.

⁹⁰ *Idem*, f. 154.

⁹¹ „Referat asupra propunerilor Academiei RPR de trimitere la specializare în străinătate în anul 1965-1966”, 10 martie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.7/1965, ff. 68-69.

having a research trip approved. However, what was crucial was the scientist's loyalty to the regime and his/her ability to contribute to either the latter's prestige or to the betterment of scientific production. By 1965, science had become not only national but also pragmatic with an eye to learning from the West.

The principle of scientific validation from both camps also explained the new elections and nominations in at the RPR Academy. In 1965, there were only twenty foreign honorary or standing academicians – 14 from socialist countries out of which 9 from the Soviet Union. The Presidium decided to reconfirm 16 scientists as honorary members and to elect 47 new academicians. The number of foreign academicians would reach 83, from 22 countries (12 from the USSR, 13 from France, 8 from Italy, 5 from USA, 5 from GDR, etc.).⁹² The RWP wished to reach a balance between East and West in what concerned the Academy's membership. It also seems to have aimed at re-establishing the tradition of large French and Italian contingents of academicians. It was the expression of the cultural and scientific tradition of collaboration between these two countries and Romania. However, one side effect of this decision was the enlargement of the RPR Academy to previously unknown dimensions. In 1966, there were 100 full members and 139 standing members distributed across 12 sections. Between 1963 and 1965, 42 new full academicians and 98 standing ones were elected. The sheer numbers of members and employees made the Romanian Academy the largest one in the socialist camp after that of the USSR.⁹³ A DPC report went as far as remarking that unlike other prestigious Academies and unlike the pre-1945 regulations of the Romanian Academy, there was no law limiting the number of academicians in Romania.

⁹² „Referat cu privire la convocarea Sesiunii generale anuale a Academiei RPR”, 26 ianuarie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no. 7/1965, ff. 34-35.

⁹³ „Referat privind unele probleme în legătură cu îmbunătățirea organizării Academiei RSR”, 24 ianuarie, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no. 16/1966, ff. 10-15.

The significant and rapid expansion of the Academy was a direct result of processes dealt with in previous chapters: first, the unprecedented state involvement (i.e., funding) into planned science; second, as science became national the communist regime transformed the Academy, not only into “a factory”, but also into a site of symbolic capital both domestically and internationally. The Academy produced not only knowledge, but prestige as well, which in its turn generated systemic legitimacy. At the same time, the combination between a discourse of independence in the international politics of science, the switch of focus to the West, the rekindling of traditions of regional cooperation, the opportunities of travelling abroad, and, last but not least, re-establishing the Academy’s role of pinnacle of national epistemic consecration strengthened the relationship between scientists and the regime. In other words, the academicians became the bearers of the good news of national progress and the valiant defenders of Romania’s prestige and honor in an inimical and competitive world. The academicians were the dignitaries of the RWP/RCP’s politics science abroad. The analysis of the shifting geography of Romania’s science (with a focus on the historical front) during the first half of the 1960s, reveals that the Academy was fully integrated and doing its part in the communist regime’s campaign for autonomy and re-invention of systemic identity.

B. The Politics of Sovereignty between the Socialist Nation and Tradition

1. The April 1964 RWP Declaration: The Nation by Way of Lenin to Stalin

On July 1964, *The New York Times* declared that “the pursuit of independence and a national renaissance by the communist leadership of Romania appears to be developing with the

precision and confidence of a well-made symphony.”⁹⁴ The RWP politics of sovereignty had reached a climax that year through the publication of a declaration on the main problems of the world communist movement (April 26) that summed up the party line in intra-bloc, world communist, and international relations in general. It was the result of a steady accumulation of decisions, policies, and maneuvers toward regime individuality that had begun since mid-fifties. They gradually re-defined the identity of the communist regime generating a domestic formulation of national sovereignty. What must be emphasized is that the developments of 1963 and 1964 were not a sudden break from the RWP line. Moreover, they did not characterize only the political and the economic realms. They were prepared by the evolutions between 1955 and 1963 and, even more importantly, they had a systemic nature, reflecting transformations within multiple layers of the regime, particularly on the scientific front. As shown in previous chapters, by 1964, planned science in Romania had steadily become national, being an integral aspect of the RWP’s politics of sovereignty. According to Miron Nicolescu, the new President of the RSR Academy (since 1966):

...I consider that we must all work together because we are members of the same chorus. I believe that the establishment of an atmosphere of mutual trust will contribute to the highest degree to an upsurge in the creative activities of the Academy. Only on the basis of mutual trust among the members of the Academy, between the academicians and the administration, we can ask from each of us maximum of effort without perceiving such request as a form of coercion.⁹⁵

Furthermore, historians, in concert with the DPC, had formulated the basic tenets of a master-narrative of the Nation that gradually penetrated the political discourse of the RWP leadership. What happened between 1964 and 1966 was the *consolidation* and *proclamation* of the Nation as master symbol of regime identity. Political discourse merged with epistemic practices. *Topoi* of

⁹⁴ *Apud* Tismaneanu, *Stalinism for All Seasons...*, p. 182.

⁹⁵ „Stenograma întâlnirii conducerii PCR cu membrii prezidiului Academiei” (27 mai 1966) in Alina Pavelescu and Laura Dumitru (coord.), *PCR și intelectualii în primii ani ai regimului Ceaușescu* (București: Arhivele Naționale ale României, 2007), p. 62.

emancipation, originality, pride, and sovereignty generated the specific outlook of Romanian communism that encompassed ideology, science, and culture into national Stalinism.

Between 1963 and 1964, the RWP's position in the Soviet bloc crystallized into what it considered an insurmountable antinomy: the socialist nation-state versus a supra-governmental integration of the socialist camp (i.e., Khrushchev's Comecon). The RWP's version of national sovereignty coincided with its inalienable right to build socialism in one country:

Bearing in mind the diversity of the conditions of socialist construction, there aren't and there can be no patterns and recipients. No one can decide what is and what is not correct for other countries or parties. It is up to every Marxist-Leninist party. It is a sovereign right of each socialist state, to elaborate, choose, or change the forms and methods of socialist construction. [...] It is the exclusive right of each party independently to work out its political line, its concrete objectives, and the ways and means of attaining them, by creatively applying the general truths of Marxism-Leninism and the conclusions it arrives at from a careful analysis of the experience of the other Communist and workers' parties [...] No party has or can have a privileged place, or can impose its line or opinions on other parties. Each party makes its own contribution to the development of the common treasure store of Marxism-Leninism, to enriching the forms and practical methods of revolutionary struggle...⁹⁶

The fundamental principles of the 1964 Declaration were: "national independence and sovereignty, equality of rights, mutual benefits based on comradely aide, non-interference in domestic affairs, the recognition of territorial integrity, socialist internationalism."⁹⁷ And, the vital attribute of the party-state was the state plan, which ensured the Romanian people's well-being, cultural progress, and ultimate happiness.

The main tenets of the RWP's Declaration were by no means new. Some of them simply echoed the theses of Moscow Declarations from 1957 and 1960; others were formulated during the clashes prior to April 1964. Both the party newspaper *Scînteia* and economics journal *Viața Economică* responded extensively to the increasing literature in other Comecon countries that advocated coordinated international planning and the division of labor in economic production in

⁹⁶ „Declarație cu privire la poziția Partidului Muncitoresc Român...”, *Ibidem*, p. 3.

⁹⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 2.

the socialist camp. At the same time, the president of the Council of Ministers, I G Maurer, published in 1963, an article, first in *Problems of Peace and Socialism*, then in *Lupta de clasă*, in which he advocated for “the equality of brotherly parties” and contended that there were “no superior or subordinated parties”. He also considered interference in domestic affairs of communist parties unacceptable.

The peak of the debate in Romania was reached when Soviet economist E. B. Valev⁹⁸ wrote an article about the creation of a specialized economic zone that comprised SSR Moldova, part of Southern Ukraine, Southeastern Romania, and the North of Bulgaria. This region was supposed to focus on the exploitation of oil and natural gas, on certain branches of machine-building industry, on agriculture, livestock, vine production and other areas of goods-production. The party leadership instructed C. Murgescu, the director of the Academy’s Institute of Economic Research, to respond to Valev’s article and to other texts that supported the idea of industrial complexes that did not take into account state borders. The Valev plan was interpreted by Romanian authorities as an attack against the territorial integrity of the country.⁹⁹ According to Murgescu, the contribution of the Soviet economist “defies Romania’s sovereignty and proposes the dismemberment of the country, of its national economy.”¹⁰⁰

The 1964 Declaration was the result of the RWP Plenum from April, 15-22. The first time when the party discussed the possibility of issuing such a document was during a meeting of

⁹⁸ The fact that he was the author of this article was significant because E.B. Valev was the author of the document “The Fundamental Principle of the International Division of Labor”, which was adopted at the Comecon Conference in Moscow (June 1962). See Elis Neagoe-Pleşa, „Rolul lui Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej în elaborarea politicii externe și în direcționarea relațiilor româno-sovietice (1960-1965)”, in *Annales Universitatis Apulensis*, Series Historica, 9/I, 2005, p. 231-240

⁹⁹ Florin Banu și Liviu Țăranu, *Aprilie 1964 – „Primăvara de la București”: Cum s-an adoptat „Declarația de independență a României”* (București: Editura Enciclopedică, 2004), p. lxxii and p. xlvi. Also see, Dennis Deletant, *Romania Under Communist Rule*, (Bucharest: The Civic Academy Foundation, 1998), pp. 141-143 and Mihaela Sitariu, “Balancing between East and West: Romanian Foreign Policy in the 1960s,” *Romanian Archives Review*, 2/2008, pp. 225-241.

¹⁰⁰ *Apud Croitor, România și conflictul sovieto-chinez...*, p. 294.

the Politbureau (*Birou Politic*) on February, 26-27, 1963, when the leadership discussed Al. Bârlădeanu's report on the debates within the Comecon's Executive Committee.¹⁰¹ On April 2nd the same year, Gheorghiu-Dej told the members of the Politbureau about the importance and urgency of drafting a declaration that would clarify the RWP position both domestically and internationally. According to the party leader,

the document that we will be drafting must be comprehensive, well founded, and convincing. We must present in a thorough manner the mission undertaken by our party, even if we end up repeating some of the issues raised by either comrade Maurer's article or in other occasions. [...] Without pointing fingers, we must criticize those habits and unjust methods that have concerned us, which have been subject of apprehension for the leadership of our party.¹⁰²

During the discussions among party leaders and especially at the meetings between the party leadership and scientists, students, or intellectuals (as a generic term), it was clear that the RWP did not envisage the April Declaration only as a party document. To quote I G Maurer, "the party wishes to make this a document of the entire people."¹⁰³ It was so, because, as Dej put it "in the nature of the socialist system there are no objective causes for contradictions between national tasks of socialist countries and their international obligations, between the interests of each country and the interests of the socialist community as a whole."¹⁰⁴ As a consequence, during the May 8th discussion of the Declaration with scientists and intellectuals, Maurer declared that the party

considered that it had to respond to their internationalist obligation as communists, but, at the same time, it had to respond to their national duties as leaders of a people of which fate they were responsible for. [...] If the party of a certain country is tied to the people of that country and it is accountable for that particular people, then the party will consider and decide upon the way things

¹⁰¹ For example, Maurer stated in 1963 that "there will be a time when we will have to take a stand in an article so that everybody be clarified on our position." In July 1963, the Politbureau instructed the following members of the leadership to work on the Declaration: Gh Apostol, E. Bodnarus, N. Ceaușescu, and L. Răutu. See Dan Cătănuș, „Declarația din aprilie 1964: Context istoric și ecou internațional”, in *Arhivele Totalitarismului*, an XIV, nr. 52-53, 3-4/2006, p. 111.

¹⁰² „Note din ședința Biroului Politic al CC al PMR din 2 aprilie 1964” in Banu și Țăranu, *Aprilie 1964*, p. 28.

¹⁰³ „Stenograma adunării cu oamenii de știință care au dezbătut Declarația CC al PMR..”, *Ibidem*, f. 159.

¹⁰⁴ „Stenograma ședinței plenare a Comitetului Central al PMR din zilele de 15-22 aprilie 1964” in Banu și Țăranu, *Aprilie 1964*, p. 113.

should be done, if they are to be done. If these matters would be decided by somebody else than this party, such situation will determine until the end of things that society's existence.¹⁰⁵

It appears clearly that the RWP considered and argued that the Declaration responded to the Romanians' national interests. Their conviction was apparent from the fact that the principle of the *infallibility* of the national party line was invoked. Barbu Zaharescu, the Romanian representative in Prague in the board of the journal *Problems of Peace and Socialism*, empathically declared during the discussions in May 1964 that "our party adopted on these issues [those presented in the Declaration] a clearly formulated point of view, which cannot be rebuked theoretically. [...] The position of our party in problems of principle is unassailable."¹⁰⁶

The transcripts of either the April Plenum or of the various meetings that followed also reveal an already developed sense of mission within the RWP. Referring to the Romanians involvement in the Sino-Soviet dispute, Al. Sencovici, the minister of light industry, sketched a topos that would make a long history in local communist mythology: "Our 'small' party played this beautiful, superb, historical role of true fighter, which shows to us the meaning of the great appreciation that our party enjoys. There are no happenstances in history. It is not by chance that our party was the one which played this role. This fills us with joy above all things."¹⁰⁷ The myth of the small party vanquishing all obstacles to international prominence will be appropriated by the director of the RWP's publishing house (*Editura Politică*), V. Roman, who, following the receipt of the 1961 Plenum, gave it a national coloring as well:

Some wonder abroad, how come a small country and a small party dared to intervene in a quarrel between two giants [China and the USSR, n.a.]? But principles are principles; if they are just, they will resonate with them and they will be accepted [...] Our party is widely popular. I believe, and I am sure that I am not mistaken, that we are the only party where the Central Committee is truly backed by all the party members and supported by the entire people [...] If the carriage of our

¹⁰⁵ *Idem*, f. 161.

¹⁰⁶ *Idem*, f. 47.

¹⁰⁷ „Note din ședința Biroului Politic..”, *Ibidem*, p. 205.

history has always advanced with increasing speed through various events and turning points without falling over and with no jolts, and it took us to the radiant shores of our present days, this we owe to the fact that the party has been directed with great responsibility by the Central Committee headed by comrade Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej.¹⁰⁸

V. Roman's intervention at May 1964 meeting contained, in a nutshell, the hubris of Romanian communism: a hunting inferiority complex that hid behind a master-narrative of glorious historical progress, the eschatological belief in the success of nationally building socialism (which will culminate in Ceaușescu era's myth of the Golden Age here and now), and the latent cult of personality (the demiurgic image of the Leader). Nevertheless, the topos of the "small party playing a great role" nationally and internationally was officialized around the same time with the theme of the Romanians as a small people that performed great feats in history. This approach could be noticed in the four volumes of the *Tratat de Istorie a României*. Starting with mid-sixties, it would proliferate, becoming an axiom of history-writing under communism. For example, one of the historians recuperated by and acculturated to the regime, P. P. Panaitescu, characterized the Romanians' struggles during the 15th century as "a glorious battle of a small people endangered by the policy of conquest pursued by the neighboring great feudal states."¹⁰⁹ History-writing of those years was littered with similar remarks.

The 1964 Declaration was not only the proof of a party and people overcoming their physical limitations. It was also a testimony for the RWP's true Marxist-Leninist profile and for its righteous path to building socialism in Romania. During the visit of a Romanian delegation, headed by Maurer and Chivu Stoica, in China, in March 1964 (upon their return, they stopped in the Soviet Union and met with the Soviet leadership), Mao, slightly annoyed, asked the Romanians whether they belonged to the left or the right, if they were dogmatic or revisionist, or

¹⁰⁸ „Stenograma adunării cu oamenii de știință care au dezbătut Declarația CC al PMR...”, ff. 157-158.

¹⁰⁹ P. P. Panaitescu, recenzie la *Cultura moldovenească în timpul lui Ștefan cel Mare* (culegere de studii îngrijită de prof. M Berza), București, Edit Academiei RPR, 1964 in *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, nr.4, anul XVIII, 1965, pp. 939.

whether they decided to take a position in the middle. N. Ceaușescu's response was ominous and blunt: "We are Marxist-Leninists..."¹¹⁰ During the April 15-22 Plenum in 1964, the head of the DPC, L. Răutu referred to Mao's question, giving his own informed answer: "we have our own head, we follow, as comrade Gheorghiu said, Marx, Engels, Lenin - the colossal experience gathered by the entire communist movement, by our party. We only give our own point of view."¹¹¹

Indeed, in preparation of the Declaration, the party created a series of compilations of excerpts from the founding fathers' writings (Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin) on topics related to the main problems touched upon by the document. The most interesting for the purpose of our analysis was the one on sovereignty, national independence, and the ways of a rapprochement between nations. The fundamental reference here was a paraphrase of Lenin on the role of national particularities in history that appeared in the 1964 Declaration: "as Lenin has shown, the diversity of each country's specificities, of their national and state particularities, will remain for a long time, even when socialism will be victorious, if not in the entire world, but in most countries."¹¹² The exact quote from Lenin can be found in the compilation of quotes selected by the party ideologues in preparation for the Declaration:

As long as there remain national and state differences between nations and states – and these differences will last for a long time even after the accomplishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat on a world scale – the unity of the international, communist working-class movement of all countries does not require the elimination of diversity, the effacement of national particularities (which would be an absurd dream at this moment). It does presuppose however a correct and detailed application of the fundamental principles of communism, their adjustment to the national particularities of each nation-state.¹¹³

¹¹⁰ Croitor, *Romania...*, p. 266.

¹¹¹ „Stenograma ședinței plenare a Comitetului Central..”, *Ibidem*, p. 278.

¹¹² „Declarație cu privire la poziția Partidului Muncitoresc Român...”, p. 2. This reference to Lenin was discussed also in the April Plenum, see „Stenograma ședinței plenare a Comitetului Central..”, *Ibidem*, p. 184.

¹¹³ „Documentar cu referiri la suveranitatea și independența națională, căile apropierei între națiuni (cuprinde extrase din operele lui K. Marx, Fr. Engels, V.I. Lenin și I.V. Stalin, din Declarațiile consfătuirilor reprezentanților partidelor comuniste și muncitorești (1957 și 1960) și Programul P.C.U.S.)”, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, 63/1964, ff. 19.

These lines became the core of the principle of sovereignty of the socialist nation-state in Romania after 1964. They however had a corollary in the DCP synthesis that came from Stalin's interpretation of Lenin. Stalin commented that

Lenin places the process of the disappearance of national differences and the merging of nations not during *the victory of socialism in one country*, but exclusively after the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the entire world, that is at the time of socialism's victory in all countries. [...] Trying to accomplish the unification of nations by decree from above, by coercion, would mean that you are playing into the imperialists hands, that you are torpedoing the liberation of nations [...] The first stage [of the world dictatorship of the proletariat] will be the time when all national oppression will be eliminated, *it will be a period of flourishing of nations*. [my emphases]¹¹⁴

This is how the Nation re-entered the official political discourse of Romanian communism: from Lenin with stopover at Stalin. During the proceedings of the April Plenum, Gheorghiu-Dej expressed his admiration for Stalin:

You see how they deal with Stalin. Stalin indeed was a great Marxist, a leader of the international communist and working-class movement, he brought a great contribution to the cause, but Stalin had his own faults. They themselves [the CPSU] gave the percentage of the mistakes: 75 percent his activity was correct, 25 percent it was unjust. We believe that such evaluations should not be made. We cannot agree with how they exaggerate [in this matter]. Stalin's place in history cannot be denied by anyone. We will not take Stalin's works in the public square to burn them saying that there are not worth a dime. [...] Lenin once said: show me one man who manages so many fields of activity the way Stalin does. Stalin was a worthy disciple of Marx and a close collaborator of Lenin.¹¹⁵

In the synthesis on sovereignty prepared for the Declaration, Gheorghiu-Dej underlined in red a thesis by Stalin that was already pretty much entrenched in both the discourse and the mentality of the Romanian communist: "the banner of national independence and sovereignty was thrown

¹¹⁴ *Idem*, ff. 19-20.

¹¹⁵ „Stenograma ședinței plenare a Comitetului Central..”, *Ibidem*, p. 66. Dej was not the only one who continued extolling Stalin's merits as a Marxist-Leninist after the XXth Congress and particularly after the XXIIInd Congress of the CPSU (October 1961). Two other examples will suffice. At the June 1957 plenum, during the discussion that led to the purge of Iosif Chișinevschi and Miron Constantinescu, N. Ceaușescu declared that “we can learn a lot from Stalin's works; they will have to be continuously studied taking, of course, a critical position toward some problems. But they remain valid. We did not do like others did by taking out Stalin's works from their offices and homes”. See Tudor și Cătănuș, *O destalinizare ratată...*, p. 176. In March 1964, I. G. Maurer, during the Romanian delegation's trip to China, told his hosts that “we, too, believe that Stalin was a great figure of world revolutionary movement, a reliable [*de nădejde*] Marxist-Leninist, that his contribution at the development of revolutionary movement was tremendous.” See Croitor, *România...*, p. 263.

overboard. It is beyond any doubt that you, the representatives of communist and democratic parties, will have to pick it up, to carry it further if you wish to be the patriots of your country, if you want to become *the leading force of the nation*.”¹¹⁶ [my emphasis] Dej did not have time to emulate Stalin’s declaration (he died of cancer on March, 18, 1965), but his successor, N Ceaușescu, moved rapidly to applying Stalin’s dictum to the case of Romania. At the 45th anniversary of the creation of the Romanian Communist Party (May 1966), the new party leader emphatically stated that: “The RCP continues the century-old struggles of the Romanian people for the country’s independence, for the formation of the Romanian nation and of the unitary nation-state, for the acceleration of social progress and for Romania’s advancement to civilization.”¹¹⁷ By mid-sixties, the party had become one with the Nation because, following Stalin’s call, the RCP had donned itself with the mantle of the national cause. Or, to paraphrase a participant at the meeting of May 8th, 1964, the party took on the great responsibility of the Romania’s and its people’s destiny.¹¹⁸ The party was now the agent of history that finally accomplished the national sovereignty for which Romanians had struggled throughout their existence.

The discussions and preparations related to the 1964 Declaration also revealed the ideological basis of what in 1969, at the Tenth Party Congress, will be called “multilaterally developed socialist society.” In a special issue of the *Revista de filozofie* celebrating twenty years since the “Romania’s liberation from the fascist yoke”, one of the contributors, Sergiu Tamaș (professor at the “Ștefan Georghiu” Party Academy, one of the regime’s specialists in political

¹¹⁶ „Documentar cu referiri la suveranitatea și independența națională..”, p. 21.

¹¹⁷ „Expunerea tov. Nicolae Ceaușescu, secretar general al CC al PCR la adunarea festivă cu prilejul aniversării a 45 de ani de la crearea Partidului Comunist Român”, 7 mai, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, 29/1966, f. 4.

¹¹⁸ See Aurel Mihale’s intervention in „Stenograma adunării cu oamenii de știință care au dezbătut Declarația CC al PMR...”, f. 73.

doctrines) explained that “in socialism, the elimination of antagonistic classes is the most important step taken to the homogenization of society – the fundamental facet of strengthening the unity of the people.”¹¹⁹ He was echoing one of Lenin’s tenets that appeared in the synthesis prepared for the April Plenum, according which: “in organizing production without class exploitation, in ensuring the well-being of all members of the state, socialism creates the conditions for the complete manifestation of the populations’ ‘sympathies’.” By “sympathies”, Lenin meant the national will of a people, the criterion on which he formulated his concept of self-determination. Lenin’s quote was accompanied by Dej’s remark, “yes, indeed, very important.”¹²⁰ The fundamental overlap among “the sympathies” of the people, building socialism, national sovereignty, and people’s unity through homogenization constituted the foundation of the RCP modernization project of “the multilaterally developed socialist society” (MDSS). The MDSS presupposed

The concentration of the people’s effort on the crucial directions of material and spiritual progress, the unification and rational coordination, with maximum output, of the social forces in order to fulfill the Party Program. [...] [It presupposed] the rapid development of the forces of production on the entire territory of the country, the territorial and administrative systematization and organization.... [it meant] ...insuring equal life conditions for all of country’s citizens according to the principles of socialist equality and the gradual disappearance of the differences between rural and urban centers. [...] [It required] the unitary leadership over all social and economic activity to be continued and perfected.¹²¹

But the essential element for the MDSS was the Nation. Following the path opened by the April Declaration, relying upon the existent fund of legitimizing segments from the founding fathers’ works, particularly Lenin and Stalin, in 1965, N. Ceaușescu ultimately put the Nation at the core

¹¹⁹ Sergiu Tamaș’s article from *Revista de filozofie*, an XI (1964), nr. 4 was reviewed in *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, nr.4, anul XVII, 1964, p. 959.

¹²⁰ „Documentar cu referiri la suveranitatea și independența națională..”, f. 10.

¹²¹ Nicolae Ceaușescu, “Programul Partidului Comunism Roman de făurire a societății socialiste multilateral dezvoltate și înaintarea României spre comunism”, in *Congresul al XI-lea al Partidului Comunist Român*, (București: Editura Politica, 1975), pp. 645-67.

of the Party's program and implicitly of the entire communist polity. At the Ninth Party Congress¹²², he famously proclaimed:

For a long time to come the nation and the state will continue to be the basis of the deployment of socialist society. The development of the nation, the consolidation of the socialist state comply with the objective requirements of social life; not only does this not run counter to the interests of socialist internationalism, but, on the contrary, it fully corresponds to these interests, to the solidarity of the working people, to the cause of socialism and peace. The development and flourishing of each socialist nation, of each socialist state, equal rights, sovereign and independent, is an essential requirement upon which depend the strengthening of the unity and cohesion of the socialist countries, the growth of their influence upon mankind's advance toward socialism and communism.”¹²³

2. The Party and its People: Victory, Sacrifice, and Rebirth

In 1964, the RWP officialized another *topos* of the communist regime's identity narrative: the sacrifice of the people and of the party for attaining and preserving national sovereignty consummated into the victory of socialism in the country. This central theme originated in two crucial presuppositions: the continuous national struggle throughout history and the socialist revolution from within. As shown previously, between 1958 and 1963, the RWP developed a story about its history, growth, struggle, and eventual coming into power that was increasingly centered on the deeds of the group that had stayed in the country (what Vladimir Tismaneanu called “the prison core”) led by Gheorghiu-Dej. Others were added, either members of the former Comintern or veterans of the Spanish Civil war or the French *maquis* (at least from among those who were not purged). The Soviet role had been rapidly diminishing. With the April Declaration, the RWP made official its rebuke of the Comintern, Cominform, and assigned a secondary role to the Soviet influence during the Second World War, August 23, 1944 and its

¹²² Vladimir Tismaneanu rightly argued that the Ninth Congress became of on the founding myths of the Ceaușescu's cult because it created a false image of a political reformer. I agree with Tismaneanu, who criticizes this myth by pointing to the fact that the Ninth Congress was the moment when “the most important ideological and political options of Nicolae Ceaușescu's socialism were defined.” See Tismaneanu, *Stalinism for All Seasons...*, p. 197.

¹²³ Nicolae Ceaușescu, *Expunere la Congresul al IX-lea al Partidului Comunist Român* (București: Editura Politică, 1965), pp. 60

aftermath. The axiom of this new narrative was formulated by Dej at the April plenum: “the socialist revolution is not an import commodity.” The Declaration took this point further by clarifying the RWP’s position toward the Comintern and the Cominform:

Since the last period of the existence of the Comintern, it became obvious that the resolution of the problems of the working-class in a particular country by an international center did not correspond to the stage of development of the world communist and working-class movement. The wrong methods, the interference into the domestic affairs of communist parties went as far as the removal of cadres from the leadership of certain parties, of entire Central Committees even. These methods led to the imposition of leaders from outside, while various valuable cadres were repressed. Whole parties were blamed even disbanded. Our own party experienced this period, going through difficult trials. The interference in the domestic affairs seriously affected the party line, its cadres’ policy and the organizational work, its relationship with the masses. These practices generated by the cult of personality during the Comintern were felt in the Cominform as well.¹²⁴

Besides the scapegoats already listed at the November-December Plenum in 1961, in 1964-1966 it was clear that the origin of the troubles experience by the RWP/RCP lay at the Moscow Center. I. Popescu-Puțuri, the director of the Institute of historical and social-political studies, went to great lengths to show how the February 1933 strikes and 1944 insurrection were ignored by the Comintern and the CPSU, respectively. An important note regarding the February 1933 events: if initially there was a struggle over imposing the undisputed central role of Gheorghiu-Dej, now it was important to situate them in the avant-garde of the European anti-fascist movement. And this was done in no hesitantly fashion: they were transformed into *the first antifascist movement* after the coming into power of Hitler. At the 1964 April Plenum, Popescu-Puțuri painted the following picture:

another important moment ...was our contribution to international working-class movement through the events of 1933. Hitler had risen to power, there was that idea in Central Europe that once Hitler and fascism were in power, a progressive movement would not be possible...But, the February struggles led by our communist party invalidated that theory. [...] At the fifteenth

¹²⁴ „Declarație cu privire la poziția Partidului Muncitoresc Român...”, p. 3. Romanian communists followed carefully similar discussions from other country in the socialist camp. For example, the Institute of Party History prepared for the leadership a synthesis of a debate in Poland on the role of the Comintern and its relationship with the Polish communist party. Interestingly, the main themes of the Polish version of a critique of the Comintern are pretty much identical with those of the Romanian one. See „Despre activitatea Internaționalăi Comuniste. Discuții apărute în revista poloneză ‘Z pola walki’, nr. 1 din 1966”, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no. 11/1966, ff. 43-86.

anniversary of the Comintern, however, a report of all the working-class struggles up to that point left out [our] struggle from February.¹²⁵

Puțuri's characterization of the 1933 was reinforced by several articles written by Titu Georgescu, at the time scientific secretary of the Institute of Party History, then its deputy director. The latter was even more concise than his superior: "when the Romanian working class rose, in February 1933, *for the first time in Europe* after the coming of Hitler into power, against the forces of the extreme right in Romania, it proved that the latter's advancement could be stopped, that there were still numerous and powerful forces that would continue opposing them."¹²⁶ In other words, through their sacrifice, Romanian communists gave hope to Europe in one of its direst of hours. Georgescu went even further. He considered that the trial that followed (Gheorghiu-Dej among the chief defendants), was unique because it succeeded in "concentrating almost all the attention of the masses and it put on the public agenda, before bourgeois justice, the most important needs and goals of the people."¹²⁷ The tensions and hopes of 1964 were projected in 1933. But now, these events were no more only a myth of the party. They would be integrated into a national narrative: "the popular and representative character of the 1933 struggles deepened, in the consciousness of the masses, the belief that the proletariat was the unwavering agent of the Romanian people's ideals of freedom and democracy."¹²⁸

The greatest stakes, though, lay on the interpretation of August 23, 1944. Until the Declaration, there already was an established version of the events in which the RWP leadership figured highly. But, in 1964, this story was publicly formulated against the Soviet narrative of the end of the Second World War. Various archival documents reveal the great frustration of the

¹²⁵ „Stenograma ședinței plenare a Comitetului Central..”, *Ibidem*, pp. 162-163.

¹²⁶ Titu Georgescu, „Nicolae Iorga împotriva hitlerismului”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, „25 de ani de la moartea lui Nicolae Iorga”, nr.5, anul XVIII, 1965, pp. 1427.

¹²⁷ Titu Georgescu și Fl. Dragne, „Procesul conducătorilor luptelor muncitorilor ceferiști și petroliști din ianuarie-februarie 1933”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, nr.3, anul XVII, 1964, pp. 439.

¹²⁸ *Idem*, p. 438.

Romanian leaders with what they considered a constant belittling of their roles. At the April Plenum, Puțuri expressed a general opinion by arguing that

they [the Soviets] did not believe that it [1944 insurrection] was the result of the internal forces, that it was our contribution [to the end of the Second World War]. They remained convinced that there was no party in the country, the events were explained through external factors [the Red Army, n.a.], which was utterly false...it was our accomplishment, it was not exclusively because of the presence of the external factors.¹²⁹

The crucial addition to the existing narrative about 1944 and 1945 was the centrality of the events in Romania for the final victory of the Allies during the Second World War. Ghe. Matei, another deputy-director of the Party History Institute, officially articulated the thesis according to which August 23rd did not take place when the war was already decided: “the testimonies of those years demonstrate the fact that the decisive turning point accomplished by the Romanian people in August 1944 happened at a moment when the fate of the war was far from being clear.”¹³⁰ He then went on to present tens of quotations (from Soviet officials to Anglo-American politicians and officers) that proved his point. He also advanced an additional tenet: Romania’s entrance in the camp of the Allies was a watershed in the economy of the war. He then concluded: “the facts concerning the armed insurrection of August 1944 in Romania, its national and international significance, refute those erroneous and malevolent statements that were uttered during the years by various historians, politicians, and circles from abroad hostile to the Romanian people.”¹³¹ Domestically the enemy did have a name: the Pauker-Luca factionalist group, who did not believe in the strength and ability of the Romanian people. Externally, though unnamed, the fingers were pointing to Soviet historians and officials.

¹²⁹ „Stenograma ședinței plenare a Comitetului Central.,” *Ibidem*, pp. 163.

¹³⁰ Gheorghe Matei, „Insurecția armată din August 1944 – cotitura hotărâtoare în istoria poporului român”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, nr.4, anul XVII, 1964, pp. 719.

¹³¹ *Idem*, p. 723.

These theses will then be developed at nauseam in the party historiography from 1964 onwards. In 1965, a military historian, invoking a German colleague, argued that “from an economic point of view, it [Romania joining the Allies] was the hardest blow that the German central command could receive.”¹³² Besides the topic of August 1944, the historical narrative also encompassed the issue of the country’s participation in the war on the Western front. The historians of the Party History Institute even came up with an estimate for Romania’s financial contribution to the “anti-Hitler war”: no more and no less than 1 billion dollars (at the 1938 exchange rate), four times the budget of the Romanian state between 1937 and 1938. More significantly, they presented this number and the thesis of the centrality of the Romanian contribution to the end of the Second World War in Moscow at the “Scientific Conference on the Anniversary of Twenty Years since the Victory over Fascist Germany” (14-16, April, 1965). The title of the Romanian report at this event expressed clearly the priorities and fundamental motifs of the RWP narrative: “The Armed, Antifascist Insurrection of August 1944 and Romania’s Contribution to the Defeat of Hitlerite Germany: their Significance in the Romanian People’s History.” The report simply brought together the official interpretations of these events as they cumulated and crystallized from 1959 to 1965. It concluded that the accomplishments of the internal forces in 1944 and 1945 created the conditions for the victory of socialism in Romania.¹³³

The circle was therefore complete: the antifascist resistance, from 1933 until 1944, led by the Romanian communist party and supported by the people gave the internal forces the strength

¹³² Col. D. Tuțu, „Despre contribuția militară și economică a României la războiul antihitlerist”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, nr.3, anul XVIII, 1965, p. 544.

¹³³ N. N. Constantinescu, „Participarea delegației române la Conferința Științifică de la Moscova consacrată aniversării a 20 de ani de la victoria asupra Germaniei fasciste”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, nr.3, anul XVIII, 1965, pp. 693-696.

to rise against Nazi occupation and then to greatly contribute to Germany's final defeat. These accomplishments then generated a socialist revolution in Romania that brought the party to power. Once the revolutionary breakthrough was achieved, the RWP successfully built the groundwork of socialism in the country. There were only three actors in this narrative: the Party, its leader, and the people – a foreshadowing of the Golden Age trinity “Party, Ceaușescu, Romania”. Moreover, this was also a story of exceptional abilities: the leaders stood out; the Romanians' contributions to antifascism were not only significant but trailblazing as well; and, the country and the party fundamentally influenced the course of one of the most crucial events in the twentieth century: the victory in the Second World War. To bring the point home, military historians even claimed a moral status of co-belligerence (*stat cobeligerant*) for Romania in the war.¹³⁴

The blueprint identitarian narrative of a party that successfully overcame the fallacies of the world communist movement, international dissensions, the repression of the “landowners-bourgeois regime”, the rise of fascism in Romania and Europe, the dismemberment of the country, the Nazi ‘occupation’ in order to topple a fascist-military dictatorship, to free and reunite Romania, to contribute decisively to the victory against Hitler's Germany, and ultimately to start building socialism was officially completed by 1966. Its main tenets will remain constant until the end of the communist regime. It will constitute one of its most important legitimizing discourses because this historical big-picture allowed the RCP to claim victory in the construction of socialism, to situate itself as the final and most glorious stage in the struggle for national independence, liberation, and progress. As Gheorghiu-Dej put it: “The present image of

¹³⁴ See Col. A. Petrei, „Participarea armatei române la acțiunile militare desfășurate pe teritoriul Ungariei”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, nr.3, anul XVIII, 1965, pp. 547-564 and Lt.-col. I. C. Petre, „Acțiunile de luptă duse de trupele române pe teritoriul Cehoslovaciei (18 decembrie 1944-12 mai 1945)”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, nr.3, anul XVIII, 1965, pp. 565-589.

a free and prosperous Romania testifies that the RWP deserved the people's trust and that it always fulfilled its hopes.”¹³⁵

In 1966, at the forty-fifth anniversary of the creation of the communist party in Romania, N. Ceaușescu formulated Dej's idea in a more eschatological fashion: “history granted today's generations the happiness of witnessing the fulfillment of their forefathers' most daring dreams and ideals, for they are those who are forging the golden future of the Motherland.”¹³⁶ The process of emancipation from the Moscow center that gradually evolved since 1958 produced a re-invention of the party and of its mission in history: the Millennialist ethos of the communist revolution gradually morphed into national destiny. Just like under Stalin, the victory of socialism in one country merged with the glorious fate of the Nation. Only that this time there was no federation to prevent the fusion [*sliianie*] of ethnic populations into one socialist nation¹³⁷. But, there was a dominant ethnic population with its own utopias and traditions of national salvation that had been repressed for more than a decade.

Victory could not be claimed without sacrifice. Sacrifice would only be measured in blood and through mobilization: the party's, the people's, and ultimately the Nation's. This motif appeared as early as 1960 at RWP's Third Congress [see chapter four]. Historical deliverance arrived only with the triumph of socialism:

During the centuries, the Romanian people shed a lot of blood, giving countless proofs of the its patriotic-revolutionary resources and ardor, of its fervent love for the Motherland's independence and prosperity. Through its valiant and heroic struggles, the Romanian people many times defeated the invaders who came to conquer and plunder it. But the exploiting classes have always

¹³⁵ Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, „A XX-a aniversare a eliberării României de sub jugul fascist”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, nr.4, anul XVII, 1964, p. 686.

¹³⁶ „Expunerea tov. Nicolae Ceaușescu, secretar general al CC al PCR la adunarea festivă cu prilejul aniversării a 45 de ani...”, f. 89.

¹³⁷ Terry Martin argued that at the core of *korenizatsiia* (Soviet nationalities' policy) lay the Bolsheviks' belief that the national problem should be solved through a rapprochement of nationalities rather than their fusion into a Soviet nation. According to him, this is the explanation why Russification was rather a by-product of Stalin's policies of homogenization and excision rather than the effect of concentrated state-policies. See Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire...*, p. 394.

been ready to negotiate the country's independence with foreign powers. This state of things has now ceased. The glorious insurrection of 1944 was a radical turning point in the life of the Romanian people.¹³⁸

Socialist patriotism was associated not only to such a lineage of hecatombic experiences on the path to self-determination and sovereignty. By 1965, it was also tied to a sense of belonging: being a Romanian increasingly became a moral condition that generated a heroic stand in history. For example, Romania's contribution to the Western front in the Second World War was explained by the condition of being part of a people many a times tried by a painful history: "sons of a freedom and friendship loving people, which through its own experience knew the blight of foreign domination, Romanian soldiers spilled their blood on the soil of a brotherly country in the name of the righteous cause they were fighting for."¹³⁹ Soon the Romanians would be presented as a people with a long history that had always fought just wars, for they never wished to conquer, but to defend or regain their national rights acquired during their existence: "throughout centuries, our ancient soil (*glie*) witnessed countless battles and wars. The general characteristic of the majority of all those battles of our people was that they were fought for noble goals: either for justice and social progress against oppression and exploitation, or for freedom and national independence."¹⁴⁰

Through the praise of and identification with national sacrifice and belonging, the Romanian communist party was building what historian Peter Fritzsche called "a battle community" that "dramatizes the deleterious consequences of those [social, political, ethnic, etc.] divisions and eventually realizes the homogenizing project on the basis of their elimination."¹⁴¹ The people and the state became one on the basis of national allegiance and struggle. They

¹³⁸ Gheorghe Matei, „Insurecția armată din August 1944...”, p. 701.

¹³⁹ Lt.-col. I. C. Petre, „Acțiunile de luptă duse de trupele române...”, p. 589.

¹⁴⁰ Col. C. Nicolae, „Din luptele armatei române pentru eliberarea patriei de sub jugul fascist (23 august-25 octombrie 1944)”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, nr.3, anul XVIII, 1965, p. 307

¹⁴¹ Peter Fritzsche, “Genocide and Global Discourse”, *German History*, vol. 23, no. 1, 2005, p. 109

ultimately united into one final victory: the construction of socialism. The unified, official version of these themes will be formulated by Nicolae Ceaușescu in his 1966 speech at the 45th anniversary of the party:

Țara Românească, Moldova, and Transylvania have been, for centuries under foreign yoke. These periods were characterized by the plunder of the country's riches, by the ruin of its economy, the destruction of numerous material and spiritual goods. For a long time, this has slowed down the forces of production, the social and national development. They caused Romania to fall behind with over one hundred years compared to some other countries. [...] But the ideas of national community have mobilized the people; they have redoubled their forces for the defense and prosperity of the Motherland.¹⁴²

A few paragraphs later, the party leader brought all the dots together in this narrative of suffering and belonging: the socialist revolution had put an end to the Romanians' plight by accomplishing "their interests and vital ideals." The construction of socialism and communism was "the expression of the will of the people."¹⁴³ Under the circumstances, "in the life of any country, the socialist revolution constitutes an era of *national rebirth*."¹⁴⁴ [my emphasis] In other words, the communist regime was a new, improved version of national life: "The transformations that took place, after the liberation, in the economic life and the social structure of the country, the victory of socialism in cities and the countryside, have created the conditions for the full consummation [*afirmarea din plin*] of the Romanian people's *national being* through the multilateral development and flourishing of our socialist nation."¹⁴⁵

The entrenchment of the dichotomy of the people's sacrifice and victory generated the enrichment of the notion of popular community with a novel facet: the Nation as an organism living in history. It was no coincidence that this phenomenon was simultaneous with N. Iorga's rehabilitation. During his activity as historian-politician, he had formulated this notion most

¹⁴² „Expunerea tov. Nicolae Ceaușescu, secretar general al CC al PCR la adunarea festivă cu prilejul aniversării a 45 de ani...”, f. 69.

¹⁴³ *Idem*, f. 75.

¹⁴⁴ *Idem*, f. 70.

¹⁴⁵ *Idem*, f. 67.

clearly. According to him, “a nation is not just a piece of territory or a state or an economic necessity; nor is it a product of treaties (which created it), but a nation is a soul, an elemental, almost mystical being.”¹⁴⁶ He was far from being the only historian or for that matter Romanian intellectual who purported this principle; many of them did. Throughout the inter-war period, the dominant image of public discourse was the portrayal of the nation “as a living organism, functioning according to biological laws and embodying great physical qualities, symbols of innate virtues transmitted from generation to generation.”¹⁴⁷ Historian Marius Turda argued that the domestic origin of this phenomenon was a “conservative palingensis” that took place at the beginning of the twentieth century and which extolled the traditions of the past as the rejuvenation of the Romanian nation. Authors such as N. Iorga or philosopher Constantin Rădulescu-Motru¹⁴⁸ advocated “an organic community, completely integrated within its own natural space” that could constitute “a new national body amid alleged domestic spiritual decline and unfavorable international conditions.”¹⁴⁹ This group was indeed opposed to technological modernity, a fundamental element of the new civilization brought forth by Stalinism. But in their rehabilitation, the communist regime relegated this issue to the formula of “the limits of their epoch” or “the shortcomings of their class”.

¹⁴⁶ *Apud* Nagy-Talavera, *Nicolae Iorga*., p. 325.

¹⁴⁷ Marius Turda, “The Nation as Object: Race, Blood, and Biopolitics in Interwar Romania,” *Slavic Review*, Vol. 66, No. 3 (Fall, 2007), p. 413. For extensive details on the debates over national culture, traditionalism vs modernism, see the two seminal studies by Zigu Ornea *Tradiționalism și modernitate în deceniul al treilea* (București: Editura Eminescu, 1980) and *Anii treizeci. Extrema dreaptă românească* (București: EST-Samuel Tastet Editeur, 2008). Also Sorin Alexandrescu, *Paradoxul român* (București: Editura Univers, 1998).

¹⁴⁸ For example, Rădulescu-Motru was listed by the scientific secretary of the Institute of Party History, Titu Georgescu, among those intellectuals who adjusted their theories and beliefs in order to fight against fascism (others were Iorga, philosopher P. P. Negulescu and economist and high profile member of the National Peasant Party, Virgil Madgearu). See Titu Georgescu, „Nicolae Iorga împotriva hitlerismului”, *Ibidem*.

¹⁴⁹ Marius Turda, “Conservative Palingenesis and Cultural Modernism in Early Twentieth-Century Romania,” *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions*, 2008, 9:4, p. 437 and p. 441.

For example, during N. Iorga's recuperation by the historical front, his work was presented as "one of the fundamental sources for the history of Romanians' unity and of the unitary nature of our entire national life."¹⁵⁰ And, according to the president of the section of the historical science of the RPR/RSR Academy, C. Daicoviciu, "through his work, Nicolae Iorga appears to have imposed himself even more after his death, I would go so far to say *beyond death*."¹⁵¹ To lesser degree than Iorga, Rădulescu-Motru too became "a cultural leader", a "rationalist thinker tied to the scientific spirit", the author of "a philosophy with a national, autochthonous character." But just like Iorga, Rădulescu-Motru, despite his fallacies, had always aimed to elevate the level of civilization in our country.¹⁵² In the sixties though, just like in the case of the relationship between tradition and historical front, Rădulescu-Motru's influence was more pervasive than his literal rehabilitation. In 1900, Rădulescu-Motru organized an inquiry on the main ethno-psychological features of the Romanian people. The questionnaire contained four questions:

- I Which literary work expresses best the nature (*fire*) and the aspirations of the Romanian kin (*neam*)?
- II Which is the dominant feature of a Romanian's nature (*fire*)
- III Which are the qualities and defects that distinguish the Romanian nationality as compared to other nationalities?
- IV Which historical fact best revealed the qualities and defects of the Romanian kin (*neam*)¹⁵³

¹⁵⁰ Vasile Netea, „N Iorga istoric al unității naționale”, *Ibidem*, p. 1426

¹⁵¹ C. Daicoviciu, „Nicolae Iorga și autohtonii”, *Ibidem*, p. 1227.

¹⁵² Petru Vaida, „Constantin Rădulescu-Motru”, in Dumitru Ghișe, Nicolae Gogoneață (coord.), *Istoria filozofiei românești*, vol. II (București: Editura Academiei RSR, 1980) *apud* Cristian Preda, „Un totalitarism pe potrivă sufletului românesc”, studiu introductiv C. Rădulescu-Motru, *Scrieri politice* (București: Nemira, 1998), p.14. Motru was first partially rehabilitated in Nicolae Gogoneață, „Sistemul filozofic al lui C. Rădulescu-Motru,” in *Revista de filozofie*, XV, nr.4, 1968 and in Simion Ghiță, „Știința și cunoștere în concepția lui C. Rădulescu-Motru”, article in the collective volume *Filozofia și sociologia românească în prima jumătate a secolului al XX-lea* (București: Editura Academiei RSR, 1969).

¹⁵³ „Chestionar privitor la psihologia poporului român” in V. Pârvan, *Scrieri*, p. 51. Also see Zub, *De la istorie critică..*, p. 233.

In 1965, echoing this initiative, the president of the RSR Academy's section of economic and juridical science, Athanasie Joja, sketched the spiritual profile of the Romanian people. According to Joja,

the moral physiognomy of the Romanian people is characterized by the following components: reason and rationality (in the broad sense), realism, a lively sense of nature, the melancholy of the *doina*, humor and vivacity, a deep national feeling, which is yet sober and allied with a spirit of broad tolerance, a remarkable capacity for absorption, a spirit of moderation and understanding of the concrete, and rejection of mysticism (...) We are of the view that these qualities in their entirety characterize the Romanian people and are peculiar to their profile among the great family of the peoples of the world.”¹⁵⁴

It is obvious that Joja never considered pointing to the defects of the Romanians or to compare them with other nations.¹⁵⁵ At the same time, if we are to adjust his characterization to Motru's questionnaire, the fundamental change consisted in the fact that Joja's main presupposition was that these moral qualities defined the people as a result of their *entire* history.

Motru's influence in the evolution of the characterization of the Nation under communism will soon become even more obvious. In 1971, the volume *Națiunea și contemporaneitatea*, written by a collective of authors from the Institute of historical and social-political studies (formerly the Institute of Party History), defined the Nation as an ethnic community. And, in conceptualizing a people's ethnicity, the authors appealed to Rădulescu-Motru's definition according to which ethnicity was “fixed in three states of a community's consciousness: of origin, of language, and of destiny.”¹⁵⁶ Furthermore, once the idea of a national physiognomy of the Romanians was integrated, in mid-seventies, into the official political discourse of the regime, Rădulescu-Motru's more extensive rehabilitation was inevitable. In a volume published in 1984, Al. Cazan, described Motru's work as an “open synthesis of the life

¹⁵⁴ *Steaua*, Vol.16 (September 1965), pp. 3 *apud* George Schopflin, “Rumanian Nationalism,” *Survey* 20:2/3 (1974), pp. 96.

¹⁵⁵ Nor did V. Pârvan when he responded, in 1900, to Motru's questionnaire.

¹⁵⁶ Ioan Ceterchi (coord.), *Națiunea și contemporaneitatea* (București: Editura Științifică, 1971), p. 25.

and understanding of the essential strata of the empirical and spiritual history of the Romanian people and of its destiny...”¹⁵⁷ For Iorga, Motru, and Pârvan, “the individual was merely the product of society and therefore only a collective ideology could configure the national collective body.”¹⁵⁸ Furthermore, their emphasis on the imperative of solidarity, social discipline, and individual action subordinated to communal purposes came very close to the mobilizational ethics of Romanian communism.¹⁵⁹

Scientism and the myth of progress were two of the fundamental additions to this paradigm of organic palingenesis along with a deeper understanding of egalitarianism – the non-antagonistic classes of the communist society that gave the Nation its characteristic and superior socialist physiognomy. At the same time, Stalinism’s claim of hyper-rationality and historical determinism only deepened and worsened the effects of this specific form of nationalism. Its organicity, according to M. Eminescu (the Romanian national poet, one of the founding-fathers of this ideology), Iorga, the younger V. Pârvan, Rădulescu-Motru, or geographer Simion Mehedinți, was the expression of the people’s genius, of its eternal spirit. Under communism, in

¹⁵⁷ C. Rădulescu-Motru, *Personalismul energetic și alte scrieri*, studiu, antologie și note de Gh. Al. Cazan (București: Editura Eminescu, 1984) *apud* Cristian Preda, „Un totalitarism...”, *Ibidem*, p. 15.

¹⁵⁸ Trencsényi, „Conceptualizarea caracterului național...”, *Ibidem*, p. 361. For Pârvan see „Ideile fundamentale ale culturii sociale contemporane”, Pârvan, *Scrieri...*, pp. 353-375. For Iorga see the discussion below or, for instance, „Ce înseamnă astăzi concepția istorică”, *Lecția de deschidere la Universitatea din București* (31 octombrie 1938) in Iorga, *Generalități...*, pp. 259-271.

¹⁵⁹ Both Iorga and Rădulescu-Motru had extremely harsh words for Bolshevism, though they admired the Soviet Union ability to mobilize the population and transform the social environment. The difficulty in the rehabilitation of Motru lay in the fact that he supported the war against the Soviet Union, admired Hitler, and backed Antonescu’s dictatorship. Iorga was a convenient case: he was assassinated by the Iron Guard before the war began. Romanian historians also glossed over the fact that some could consider him one of the mentors of Corneliu Zelea Codreanu and that his early writings were vehemently anti-Semitic (throughout his life, Iorga considered any Jew who would refuse assimilation to Romanian culture as a potential enemy) In both cases, their usage of the concept of race created difficulties of interpretation for interpreters under communism. See my discussion below on this matter in Iorga’s case. On the analysis of Iorga’s anti-Semitism and his nationalism’s influence over the Iron Guard see the chapter “Background and Precursors to the Holocaust” in Tuvia Friling, Radu Ioanid, Mihail E. Ionescu (eds.), *Final Report - International Commission on the Holocaust in Romania* (Iași: Polirom, 2004), pp. 19-55, Nagy-Talavera, *Nicolae Iorga...*, p. 301-307, and Leon Volovici, *Nationalist Ideology and Antisemitism : The Case of Romanian Intellectuals In The 1930s* (Oxford/New York: Published for the Vidal Sassoon International Center for the Study of Antisemitism, Hebrew University of Jerusalem by Pergamon Press, 1991).

addition to this vision, the organic Nation (as both condition and process) became a necessary and fundamental element of the irreversible progress of History. And, because of historical materialism, its organicity could be proven beyond any doubt as unquestionable, scientific truth.

Identity was no more just a category of Romanian inwardness traceable in its historical evolution. In a hyper-Rankean spirit, it was a hard fact produced by proof and logic. Again, Ceaușescu's speech on May 7, 1966, gave the general outlines both for this syncretic reading of identity and for the tool to certify it:

History shows that the creation of the nation as a form of human community and the development of the national life of the peoples is a social, logical process, a necessary and compulsory stage in the evolution of all peoples. Formed under the historical conditions of the capitalist society, the nation manifested from the beginning a tremendous influence over economic and social progress, over the advancement of peoples. Marx has shown that the objective periods necessary to social development cannot be eliminated. At most they can be shortened. Life proves that ignoring this dialectic truth, attempting to circumvent the stage of the formation of the nation or preventing its development, can severely affect the interests of peoples and those of world peace.¹⁶⁰

And

History must ... start from the scientific analysis of social reality, to present the fact not on the basis of men's subjective desires, not according to immediate political needs, to conjunctural criteria, but [it must present the facts] *as they actually happened* in correspondence to the truth of life. The value of a truly scientific history lies in the objective exposition of the facts, in their just interpretation, becoming in this way a mirror of the people's self-conscience, of the classes, bringing together the life and struggle experience of the masses and their leaders. [my emphasis]¹⁶¹

The appropriation of the vision of the “nation itself as a living being” with “its own inner evolution” (*mers lăuntric*), “a united body, one let's say circulatory system through which the same live blood flows” (Iorga)¹⁶², by the communist regime in mid-sixties can be considered a watershed: one of the founding myths of the Romanian narrative of identity had been fully

¹⁶⁰ „Expunerea tov. Nicolae Ceaușescu, secretar general al CC al PCR la adunarea festivă cu prilejul aniversării a 45 de ani...”, f. 68.

¹⁶¹ *Idem*, f. 7.

¹⁶² The two versions of the metaphor appear in various works of Iorga, but it is important to note that they are referenced by two articles in the special issue of *Studii* commemorating 25 years since the historian's assassination: Andrei Oțetea, „N. Iorga – Istoric al Românilor”, *Ibidem* and Vasile Netea, „N Iorga istoric al unității naționale”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, „25 de ani de la moartea lui Nicolae Iorga”, nr.5, anul XVIII, 1965, pp. 1411-1426.

rehabilitated, basically re-vitalizing the RWP/RCP's claim for legitimacy and transforming local communism into a national totalitarian movement. Within the framework of the master-narrative of national identity, building socialism and being a socialist citizen equaled with a healthy existence. In the words of historian C. Daicoviciu: "when the entire country, when its farthest corner is mobilized (*angrenat*), when the blood flows through all veins then the entire body is healthy."¹⁶³

In successfully creating the image of a "battle community" struggling for independence, cultural emancipation, economic prosperity, and international recognition, the RWP/RCP constructed a world-view with great tradition in the history of Romania's struggles for self-representation. Subsequently, these motifs easily resonated both with a national intelligentsia and a population frustrated by Soviet hegemony. In the second half of the sixties, the imagined context for the narrative of sovereignty within the communist polity was strikingly similar to the encoding of the national condition that the nationalism of the end of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century created in Romania. Our study of the historical front paralleled to the evolution of the political discourse of the domestic communist leadership brought forth a big-picture that increasingly resembles Amir Heinen's overview of the turn of the century nationalism:

a new and young intelligentsia suffered because of the low prestige, not only abroad but also in its own country, of Romanian culture. That is why, she was interested in rediscovering the roots of a national and autonomous culture...a culture that would also consolidate the Romanians' solidarity both in and outside the Kingdom, that could create a consciousness which would protect Romanianism from the risk of losing national identity and which would constitute the foundations of a unitary nation-state. Romanian "nationalism" found multiple points of reference. It took from *Junimea* the thesis of "forms without content". It claimed its national sensibilities from the *Liberal school* of [Simion] Bărnuțiu, and, in their youth, Iorga and A. C. Cuza [another representative of the "conservative palingensis", n.a.] sympathized with socialist circles. Even if it took some of their initiatives, it [this type of nationalism] rose against liberalism, conservatism, and socialism. Organic development was opposed to rational order. [...] It was a reflex of the economic, political,

¹⁶³ "Stenograma întâlnirii conducerii PCR cu membrii Prezidiului Academiei R.S.R." (28 mai 1966) in Pavelescu and Dumitru (eds.), *PCR și intelectualii...*, p. 66.

and cultural transformations that Romania experienced at the beginning of the 19th century. [...] This new attitude originated in fears and doubts. [...] “Nationalism” compensated for the absence of social cohesion and the lack of the feeling of self-worth by means of identification with the nation. [...] The nation seemed a being in its own, with its own expectations and personality. It was located above the idea of individual liberty, which meant that it did not constitute on the basis of the will of its members, but it existed naturally beyond them. The meaning of each individual’s life was given through and for the nation ... Inequality resulted from social division of labor and the conflicts resulting from it was reduced by the consciousness of national belonging.¹⁶⁴

Titu Maiorescu and his thesis of the forms without content will be fully rehabilitated in the second half of the 1960s. Bărnăuțiu and his school were already part of the cultural Pantheon of the communist regime. The historical front already or was well on the way to recuperating the tradition of collectivism of this current of Romanian nationalism. Furthermore, personalities such as Iorga, Pârvan, and even sociologist Dimitrie Gusti¹⁶⁵ were employed as sources of arguments for the critique of the “landowners-bourgeois regime”. Referring to the second half of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th, N. Ceaușescu defined the legacy of this period in Romania’s history: “the intelligentsia of the country was formed because of the economic, scientific, and cultural progress; with all its contradictions in political matters, it played a great role in the social-political life of Romania.”¹⁶⁶ The type of nationalism described by A. Heinen gradually became the source of tradition for the ideology of national-Stalinism on cultural, economic, social, and even political issues (particularly in reference to foreign policy). To put it differently, the political thought of the period in question now functioned as creative inspiration

¹⁶⁴ Armin Heinen, *Legiunea „Arhanghelului Mihail”: Mișcare socială și organizație politică. O contribuție la problema fascismului internațional*, ed. II, (București: Humanitas, 2006), pp. 73-75 [my translation from Romanian].

¹⁶⁵ See the review to Ovidiu Bădina, *Dimitrie Gusti. Contribuții la cunoașterea operei și activității sale* (București, Edit. științifică, 1965) in *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, nr.4, anul XVIII, 1965, pp. 962-964.

¹⁶⁶ „Expunerea tov. Nicolae Ceaușescu, secretar general al CC al PCR la adunarea festivă cu prilejul aniversării a 45 de ani...”, f. 12.

for the forging of socialist revolution within the Nation.¹⁶⁷ It substantiated the 1964 dictum that revolution can only be done from within.

Because of the specificities of the political discourse crystallized from 1964 to 1966, it can be argued that the RWP/RCP not only emulated Romanian *fin de siècle* nationalism, but it also adopted its Others: Hungary and Russia. To paraphrase Iver Neumann's thesis (on the role of Russian in the shaping of European identity), I consider that these two countries "in whatever territorial shape, by whatever name, as whatever representation," had a long history as Romania's main "liminars".¹⁶⁸ As already seen in the analysis of the *Tratat Istoria a României*, in the discussion about the refusal of Central Europe, about the role of Tsarism and Bessarabia, in the ambivalent position toward the Soviet Union during the interwar period and at the moment of revolutionary breakthrough, or, ultimately, in the RWP/RCP analysis of the nature of the world communist movement, there was a permanent ambivalence between the Romanian self and the Hungarian/Russian/Soviet others. Histories of crucial events in the history of Romania or/and the party became inextricably linked to the stories about these Others' projected identity. For example, would the formation of the Romanian people and language be possible in the absence of histories about the Hungarians or the Slavs during the same timeframe? Or the formation of the Romanian nation-state without constructing a mirror-image narrative about the Hungarians' national rights or about the demise of the Tsarist empire and the disarray of the newly created Soviet Union? From mid-1960s up until the demise of the communist regime (and many years

¹⁶⁷ I am paraphrasing one of the remarks of Polish historian J. Kowalski made during a debate organized by the editorial board of *Z pola walki* the academic journal of the Institute of Party History in Poland (march 17, 1966). The topic was Marxist political thought on the problem of the nation and the state. Its main themes were very similar to what was being discussed in Romania, as Polish historians were grappling with the dilemma of national struggle versus class struggle and the Polish identity versus Polish chauvinism. See „Informare privind desfășurarea învățămîntului ideologic în rîndul oamenilor de știință, artă, al cadrelor didactice din institutele de învățămînt superior din București”, 6 iulie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no. 37/1966, ff. 1-22.

¹⁶⁸ Neumann, *Uses of the Other*...p. 111. For the concept of "liminar" see pp. 9-11.

after), the Romanian Nation could not be understood without either or both Others figuring highly in historical narrative. Again, it was not only a matter of tradition, but also of method. In adopting the principle of history as the great tribunal judging peoples and nations, history-production could construct stories of national identity only at the expense of those found guilty for offenses and crimes against the Romanian people.

Between 1964 until 1966, the Romanian communist regime developed what Peter Fritzsche called, for Nazi Germany, “the spectacle of national unity.” He referred mainly to public manifestations of popular support, of systemic strength, of social solidarity, and of national unity or greatness.¹⁶⁹ In Romania, during the time-frame that I am dealing with such manifestations have yet to reach the megalomaniac dimensions of the seventies or the eighties. I am employing, though, Fritzsche’s phrase in order to describe the countless public meetings, gatherings or manifestations of support for the party line either in connection with the April Declaration or the Ninth Party Congress. Also, one should not overlook the concentration of anniversaries that were manifestly used by the party to prove and deepen its legitimacy. The spontaneous manifestation of support for the RCP and its leader, Nicolae Ceaușescu, during the August 1968 condemnation of the Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia did not come out of nowhere. Its origin lay in tumultuous months before 1964 and in its feverish aftermath.

I believe that the coinage spectacle of national unity can also describe the transformation of the scientific field in continuation of pre-1964 developments and in response to the danger from outside, to the temptation of epistemic international prestige, and to the imperative of national progress. The system of planned science created after 1948 was altered in order to achieve greater national integration, coordination, and centralization. The cultural revolution was

¹⁶⁹ Peter Fritzsche, *Life and Death in the Third Reich* (Cambridge/London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2008).

included into a technological revolution that, in its turn, was situated in a framework of national, civilizational Enlightenment. At a time of struggle for national sovereignty, science was once again called upon to help Romanians consciously build their future. In the words of Al. Bârlădeanu, first vice-president of the Council of Ministers, at the April 1966 general session of the RSR Academy: “science places the landmarks of the future because, to large extent, it decides upon the human condition.” The new vision of science, and implicitly of history-production, had to represent the genius of the Romanian people.¹⁷⁰

C. A System of National Planned Science

1. Preliminary remarks

In February 1965, at a meeting of the chiefs of the sectors of the party’s publishing house (*Ediura Politică*), its director, Valter Roman, declared that the fundamental problems of the cultural revolution have been dealt with extensively, but this has been done in patterns that have grown old in contrast with the new phase of socialism’s development in Romania.¹⁷¹ Couple of months earlier, at the 1964 April Plenum of the RWP’s Central Committee, the head of the Department of Agitation and Propaganda, Leonte Răutu, Roman’s superior, had emphatically underscored, though rather in a stock phrase fashion, that “times they are a-changing”: “The world of today is no longer the world of yesterday. Our today’s country too is no longer that of

¹⁷⁰ At the Ninth Congress, echoing earlier statements of the party leadership (Dej included), N. Ceaușescu declared that scientific research was the manifestation of each people’s genius. He then went on to praise the exceptional talent, qualities, strength, and abilities of the Romanians as were proved on the scientific front. See Al. Bârlădeanu’s closing remarks at the General Session of the RSR Academy (6-8 April 1966) in *Analele Academiei Republicii Socialiste România*, anul 100 (1966), seria a IV-a, Volumul XVI (București: Editura Academiei RSR, 1967), p. 309a dn p. 313.

¹⁷¹ „Stenograma ședinței de analiză a activității Editurii Politice din 22 februarie 1965”, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.15/1965, f. 11.

yesteryear.”¹⁷² Under the circumstances, when two of the most important party ideologues announced the dawning of a new era, science too awaited for its name to be called in the new order of things. Roman made no secret of the new vision of the scientific front: in the new stage of Romanian’s progress, the cultural revolution was going to be enveloped in a technical-scientific revolution that would give the former new meanings.

The coming of the technical-scientific revolution had been already announced by the RWP’s general secretary Ghe. Gheorghiu-Dej, in February 1964. With an economy rapidly (or in his words “thunderously”) developing, Romania had to rise to the challenges posed by the international competition over innovation and technology presupposed by the revolution in question. Therefore, improvements had to be made on the scientific front in terms of its greater inclusion of higher education, of the subjects taught and research, and in reference to a better coordination between knowledge, production and the state plan.¹⁷³ These still tentative ideas advanced by Dej, would be clarified by Ceaușescu at the Ninth Party Congress. The fundamental consequence of the integration of the cultural revolution into the scientific-technological one, and the premise of the latter’s success in Romania, was the “the unitary coordination of scientific research.” On these matters, the most important objectives defined at the Ninth Congress were: the intensification and continuous elevation of scientific research; the simultaneous development of fundamental and applied research; further tightening of the ties between science and the practice of constructing socialism.¹⁷⁴ Science was urged and planned to draw closer to the national life, which in its turn, was circumscribed as independent economic progress and growth.

¹⁷² Banu și Țăranu, *Aprilie 1964...*, p. 266.

¹⁷³ “Cuvântarea tovarășului Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej la conferința organizației de partid a orașului București”, p. 2.

¹⁷⁴ „Dezvoltarea cercetării științifice”, 28 septembrie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no. 34/1965, ff. 33-34.

In other words, by 1964 the communist regime had reached the conclusion that the existent system of planned science did not respond properly to the necessities of building socialism in one country in the context of the international affirmation of the Romanian socialist nation-state. The general principles of planning and organizing science remained in place. What changed was the justification for further centralization. Science was now judged on the basis of “its efficiency, of its contribution to augment the material and spiritual riches of our people.”¹⁷⁵ It was called upon to contribute to the blossoming and strengthening the socialist Nation. The new planning of science would then have to focus on practicality, pragmatism, and national interest. Nevertheless, the new system would not constitute a radical break from the past. On the contrary, to a large extent it was the continuation of earlier evolutions. Its features, however, will be accentuated by the regime’s increasing focus on national interest, on self-sufficiency, and international epistemic prestige. Between 1964 and 1966, the crucial transformations to the system of planned science were: the integration of the University in research; the creation of the National Council for Scientific Research; and, the scientific competition over national prominence and utility.

On the short run, the structures created by for the national planned science will prepare the ground for the transformation of the Academy in the first half of the seventies. On the long run, these changes will generate a paradoxical situation within the historical front: on the one hand, its polycentrism will grow in the context an intricate system of checks and balances within the party-state; on the other hand, the struggle for resources and over interpretations of the Nation will only deepen its parochialism and its reproductive function in the regime’s economy

¹⁷⁵ „Cuvîntarea tovarășului Nicolae Ceaușescu, secretar general al CC al PCR, la lucrările primei ședințe plenare a Consiliului Național al Cercetării Științifice, 14 iulie 1966”, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, 29/1966, f. 94.

of legitimation. Once all history-production became national(ist), epistemic authority and productive possibilities would only accentuate the expectations of usefulness for the Nation.¹⁷⁶ However, one should not forget that, by 1964, the historical front was *already* fully engaged in the RWP's politics of sovereignty. Moreover, such integration was achieved by means of *overlap* and *accommodation* between historians' agendas and that of the party. Many a times, the historical front was a step ahead of the party, preparing the ground for the latter's subsequent pronouncements on collective identity.

2. The University: A New Space of Scientific Research

As we have seen in chapter three, toward the end of the 1950s and at the beginning of the 1960s, important representatives of the scientific front argued for the re-integration of higher-education in research. An increasing number of voices called for the extension of the role initially assigned to universities in 1948: to bring up the new experts, the red specialists, of the socialist order. By mid-sixties, various *catedras* already had collectives of research on various topics. Earlier, I gave the example of the priorities for the academic activity of the program of universal history at the History Department of the Bucharest University. Also, universities had their own programs of specialization abroad. At the same time, the regime had always called for

¹⁷⁶ Katherine Verdery best formulated this thesis in *National Ideology under Socialism: Identity and Cultural Politics in Ceaușescu's Romania* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991). In her reading, the space of cultural politics in Ceaușescu's Romania was regulated by "mechanisms of bureaucratic allocation". This meant two things: "first, many participants strive continually to justify claims to resources, and in this process the ideas about the Nation and proper representation of its values play a vital part. Second, there is a tendency for those pursuing greater cultural authority to seek some degree of upward mobility on the political dimension, so as to ensure access to resources necessary for their activity." (p. 94) Her excellent analysis of the economy of symbolic capital under Ceaușescu does have a crucial flaw: in using a unilaterally instrumentalist interpretation of politics of culture, she overlooks the role of cultural producers as willful and engaged actors in the "spectacle of national unity". She thus fails to understand the latter's fundamental authorship (not party induced) in the narratives of identity in Ceaușescu's Romania. Unsurprisingly, she tends to idealize some of the crucial actors of the historical front (e.g., D. Prodan). Additionally, Verdery's lack of attention to these issues limits her understanding of the role of tradition, of overlapping Romanian nationalisms, in the Nation games from 1965 to 1989.

the insertion of young cadres formed by the socialist system of higher-education into programs of fundamental research. The justification behind these initiatives was two-fold: first, it allowed the regime to establish a “correct proportion” between the old and the new, safeguarding the system from being overwhelmed by “reactionary influences and ideas” from pre-1945 times; second, it responded to the need of additional personnel for the ever-expanding structures of planned science.

As science gradually became national, the party warmed to the idea of continuity between the present and the past, to invoking and emulating traditions of scientific organization from pre-communist Romania. Once the RWP’s declared its sovereignty within the world communist movement and in relation to the Soviet hegemony, all these elements were brought together for a re-arrangement of the planning of science. Last but not least, one must not overlook the ability of the Romanian communist authorities to learn or observe other cases than the Soviet blueprint. As Paul Niculescu-Mizil once said, “the leadership of the party did not take a decision out of the blue (*după ureche*). It first laboriously documented an issue before making a decision on it. This applies to matters of history, international relations, politics, as well as economy, social matters and many others.”¹⁷⁷ In the end, the university was fully integrated into research on two basic principles: it was the largest potential reservoir of national scientific cadres that would go on to produce for the Nation; and, if economy was to flourish it need additional labor force, therefore the system of research had to include this huge well of cadres.

The system created after 1948 was founded on the idea of a separation between research and education. This allowed for greater autonomy at the level of the Academy as compared to the University’s. One of the reasons behind this separation was the University’s character of

¹⁷⁷ Paul Niculescu-Mizil, *O istorie trăită...*, p. 258.

locus of socialist pedagogy, the crucial site of cultural revolution where ‘reactionary’ influences had to be reduced to a minimum.¹⁷⁸ This is why the purges of 1957-1959 affected much more significantly the universities than the Academy and its institutes. This is why some of the victims of this period could continue their work at the Academy’s institute. Moreover, the latter also functioned as safe havens for ‘has-beens’ (*foști*) and justifiably raised fears of “ideological contamination” on the side of the DPC. To put it differently, toward the end of 1963, much of the hybridization between Stalinism and discourses about the Nation that took place in various epistemic communities under the supervision of the Academy was yet to materialize, at a significant level, into the curriculum and policies of the universities.

During the 1963/1964 academic year, the Ministry Education organized a country-wide analysis of the universities’ curricula. The commissions made up of governmental specialists, professors, and representatives of the DPC produced a series of reports that painted a bleak picture for a regime that was just preparing to declare its autonomy in the Soviet bloc. There were “widespread deficiencies in the scientific and ideological orientation of the courses, in the way our party’s policy was presented, in the manner in which Romanian scholars’ contribution to the development of science, culture, and technology was described.” The analysis of the Ministry of Education revealed five groups of problems that affected Romanian universities:

- a) some technical courses make only partial reference to our country’s experience, the latter being discussed only in introductory lectures; [...]
- b) there are mistakes in analyzing the international division of labor, as our country was presented as producer of only agricultural goods in the Comecon; [...]
- c) the sources of information and the bibliographies are most of the times unilateral, listing only Soviet works even in fields that have not been developed in the USSR; [...]
- d) many courses do not reflect the new accomplishments of modern science; [...]
- e) Romanian

¹⁷⁸ In 1965, this principle was criticized by the party leadership: “there attempt to limit the involvement of faculty in the work with students. They were of course invalidated by the university life itself...”, „Proiect. Dezvoltarea continuă a cercetărilor științifice – factor de seamă al progresului economic și social-cultural al patriei”, 1 decembrie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no. 34/1965, ff. 100.

science and the traditions of our schools [*experiența școlii noastre*] are not sufficiently capitalized, especially for courses of history of various sciences.¹⁷⁹

In June 1964, these conclusions were presented at a meeting (*consfătuire*) with the rectors, deans and the secretaries of the party organizations from all the higher education institutions in Romania. The participants decided that each discipline required a clear agenda of curricula transformation in order to insure “a high scientific level on the basis of extensive documentation, of a closer connection with the practice of constructing socialism in our country, with the [most important] party and state documents, and with the experience and traditions of our own schools [in the various scientific fields].”¹⁸⁰ These findings and rulings were communicated and discussed in the scientific councils and in the *catedra* collectives of each department of each university. The conclusions reached during the latter session of meetings were used as guidelines for a second round of country-wide governmental examination of the higher-education system. The final results of reached by the specialized commissions for each scientific field were presented, in April 1965, to the Minister of Education, Ștefan Bălan.

This succession of events shows that Romanian higher-education experienced an extensive recalibration to the national line officially adopted by the communist regime. The entire curriculum was transformed in order to reflect the autonomy from the Soviet Union, the acquired epistemic self-centeredness of domestic science, the latter’s pre-1945 traditions, and the shift in the geographical interest of knowledge toward the West. The above described process inevitably affected the teaching of history as well. The numbers of hours for general courses on Romanian and universal history were increased, while the number of special courses and seminars was decreased. According to the DPC report, “new syllabi on Romanian and universal

¹⁷⁹ „Informare privind acțiunile întreprinse de Ministerul Învățământului în scopul îmbunătățirii orientării și conținutului învățământului superior”, 17 iunie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.20/1965, ff. 31-32.

¹⁸⁰ *Idem*, f. 33.

history were elaborated in reference to the discussions on the Declaration adopted at the Central Committee Plenum of the RWP in April 1964.” Subsequently, “the importance of the internal factors was emphasized, while the exaggerations about the role of external factors were eliminated. New chapters on world culture in various periods, on the national liberation struggle of colonial people and subjugated countries were introduced in the syllabus of universal history. History of the USSR was included in the universal history course.”¹⁸¹

In the aftermath of the 1964 Declaration, scientists, professors, or, more generally, intellectuals were encouraged to take a stand, to offer alternatives to Soviet science and culture. One literary critic put it best during the May 8th meeting with “men/women of science and culture” that discussed the Declaration: “in these matters [of science and culture, n.a.] we must get used with having our own point of view. We must adopt it responsibly, decisively, and in total earnestness (*cu temeinicie*).”¹⁸² Moreover, as Elvira Cincă, the head of the Sector for Pedagogic Training and Higher-Education, remarked in her report about the meeting of the party organizations in several departments of Bucharest University, there was the tendency of even “by passing the most crucial issues of the Declaration in order to focus on the negative aspects of mechanically applying Soviet science to our higher education.”¹⁸³ In 1964, the personnel within Romanian higher-education grabbed hold of the opportunity to free their respective fields of the weight of Soviet hegemony. Interestingly though, the type of “exaggerations” mentioned by Cincă were not as widespread at the meeting of the History Department of Bucharest University, according to the report. It helped that the speakers who discussed the problems of higher-education in history were individuals such as V Maciu, E Condurachi, or Ghe Ștefan, historians

¹⁸¹ *Idem*, ff. 34-36.

¹⁸² See Ovid Crohmălniceanu’s intervention in „Stenograma adunării cu oamenii de știință care au dezbătut Declarația CC al PMR..”, f. 144.

¹⁸³ Elvira Cincă, „Informație privind adunarea organizației de partid de la Universitatea din București...”, f. 14.

who already had extensive experience in adjusting to party lingo and practices. At the same time, they were among the actors of the return of the Nation in history-production, so the topics they presented at the 1964 meeting (the war of independence, the origin of the Romanian people, the role of Tsarist empire, etc.) had already been in discussion for several years.¹⁸⁴

After an initial phase of almost several months during which the communist regime focused on implemented nationally-centered curricula in Romanian universities, in the spring of 1965 the subject of their possible role in a reshuffled system of research was put forward again in both academic and party-state circles. A report on the directions of the activity of research from 1960 to 1965 and on its anticipated trajectories from 1966 to 1970 showed the new composite role assigned to higher education. The premise of the proposals for re-organization from 1966 onwards was that “considering current conditions, it is of the utmost importance to find the best means for a rational employment of scientific cadres and of use for the material resources, for their coordinated concentration and control in order to solve the major problems of our economy and culture.”¹⁸⁵ The conditions the document was referring to consisted in the communist regime’s position of manifest individuality, of autonomy within the Soviet bloc after 1964. As Romania attempted to prove that it was able to build socialism on its own terms, rationalization, concentration, extraction, control, and use of resources and production became vital for the regime. But, according to party-state representatives, the four-tier system of scientific research (Academy, institutes, education, factory laboratories) could not raise to this challenged. There four problems with the functioning of this type of system:

¹⁸⁴ Ion Răduțiu, „Notă cu privire la adunarea cu studenții de la facultatea de istorie”, 27 mai, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.29/1964, f. 27.

¹⁸⁵ „Direcțiile principale ale activității științifice în perioada 1960-1965 și perspectivele ei în anii 1966-1970”, 18 mai, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.7/1965, f. 123. Also see „Referat privind necesitatea stabilirii direcțiilor principale ale dezvoltării științei în RPR”, 3 aprilie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.7/1965, ff. 87-89.

a)Currently, each central institution (Academy, departments, Ministry of Education, etc.) deals with the bearing and guidance of research. Therefore there is no unitary management, organized on a permanent basis.

b)the development of scientific research in all four big groups of units under circumstance of the absence of overall coordination and of a unitary plan of research diminished our potential for scientific research

c)in the existent system, the rational use of all scientific forces, their concentration upon solving the most pressing issues presupposed by the development of economy, science, and culture is not realized.¹⁸⁶

If the overall panacea to all of the above was the creation of the National Council for Scientific Research (see below), another recommendation is of interest for the present discussion. The Report remarked that “despite the fact that in higher education there is the largest number of cadres of with high qualification (over 12.000), they are not involved enough in the scientific activity that is underway in the factory labs and in the research institutes.” It was recommended that the system of recruiting, selecting, and of promoting cadres from the universities should improved in order to allow for the engagement in scientific work of young graduates and faculty (e.g., the finalization of the PhD regulations).¹⁸⁷ These measures could only be welcomed by academicians. For example, in May 1966, the head of the Academy’s Section of Chemistry, C-tin Nenițescu declared that “we separated research from education. [...] The issue now is how to repair this blunder.”¹⁸⁸ The argument of dormant human potential, though, was not the only one used for justifying a deeper integration and a more prominent role of university in the system of scientific research in Romania. Starting from the tradition of the scientific field in pre-1945 Romania, the idea of rehabilitating a “school” within a specific branch overlapped with the principle of whole university departments pursuing research. The head of the Central Committee’s Section of Science and Art, Manea Mănescu, remarked: “the Romanian schools of

¹⁸⁶ „Direcțiile principale ale activității științifice în perioada 1960-1965...”, ff. 123-124.

¹⁸⁷ *Idem*, f. 126.

¹⁸⁸ „Stenograma întâlnirii conducerii PCR cu membrii prezidiului Academiei” (27 mai 1966) in Pavelescu and Dumitru (coord.), *PCR și intelectualii...*, p. 74.

mathematics, physics, medicine, history, and linguistics appeared and developed within higher education.”¹⁸⁹

The theme first appeared during the anniversary of 100 years since the creation of Bucharest University. For example, in *Studii*, two articles deal with the history of this university in the second half of the 19th century and during 20th century. For each discipline, founding fathers were listed; each department was described as a locus of pioneering research of national science. For example, in history, D Onciul, I Bogdan, N Iorga, and V Pârvan were highlighted for the period in question. The author, Gh. T Ionescu, insisted on the double function of the University; it simultaneously was “the main irradiating center of national culture” and “the brain of the nation.” Making a barely veiled reference to the contemporary debates, Ionescu stated that, in the interwar period, the *catedras* (the chairs), because of their double function of pedagogy and research, were “the primary unit of higher-education, as their main role was the organization of collective work. (*muncii în colectiv*)”¹⁹⁰ In praising the essential role of Bucharest University, the second article goes as far as arguing that in 1913 this institution was “one of greatest centers of higher-education in Europe from the point of view of both the number of students and the quality of the knowledge [produced], which was acknowledged both inside the country and abroad.”¹⁹¹ This statement is another example of a tendency that will only worsen with the evolution of Romanian communism. The re-assertion of tradition and originality seemed to invariably slip into exceptionalism and visions of past greatness.

¹⁸⁹ „Proiect. Dezvoltarea continuă a cercetărilor științifice..., ff. 100.

¹⁹⁰ Gh. T. Ionescu, „Contribuții la istoricul universității din București după 1918”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, nr.6, anul XVII, 1964, pp. 1321.

¹⁹¹ Constantin N Velichi, „Dezvoltarea Universității din București de la înființarea ei și pînă la primul război mondial (1864-1918)” *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, nr.6, anul XVII, 1964, p. 1279.

Even more interestingly, these article, as well as speeches by various dignitaries of the scientific front or the RWP/RCP, insisted on the fact that despite the world-famed scientific accomplishments of Romanian universities, their most important personalities had always been frustrated by the inability of the state to provide the material support (*baza materială*) or to create the correct institutional structures for further progress. The second half of this thesis had existed since the beginning of the communist regime. It was one of the founding myths of the RPR Academy. By merging it with the invocation of tradition it created the necessary space for the further accommodation between the regime and the epistemic community, in our case the historians. In the first chapter, I already discussed the fact that the communist regime did meet a fundamental expectation of Romanian scientists: extensive state funding and state support for research. Once the national traditions of the various disciplines began to be rehabilitated additional common ground existed between the party and the epistemic communities.

Historian L. Nastasă gave an accurate description of the situation of Romanian universities during the pre-communist period:

Considering the prevailing general circumstances and the limited material resources of higher-education during the inter-war period, the imperative of professional formation prevailed over that of scientific research. In many occasion, almost all the professorial body complained about this situation., invoking the necessity of utilitarianism, of pragmatism, of theory, and of pure science. To these, in 1928, Ion Petrovici¹⁹² added the moral and patriotic priorities that the university had to meet. In fact, these “claims” (*revendicări*) had been a constant of higher learning since the second half of the 19th century, once the modern state was created...¹⁹³

¹⁹² Romanian philosopher, professor at the University in Iasi, Petrovici wrote in 1928 a manifesto *The Universities' Calling (Menirea universităților)* in which he argued among, other things, that the universities must be “irradiant centers [notice that Ionescu used the same metaphor] of generous patriotism” and sites of “intellectuals emancipation” as citadels of struggle against any tyranny.” See Nastasă, *Itinerarii*, p. 32. Ironically, I. Petrovici was anti-Semitic and he was one of the draftees of the charta of Carol II's National Rebirth Front. He then entered Ion Antonescu's government in 1941 as Minister of Education and Denominations, as racial legislation was already in place. After 1944, he was included in the trial of the war criminals. being released in 1964. In 1966 his memoirs will be appear at the Publishing House for Literature. Another volume of recollections will come out in 1979.

¹⁹³ Nastasă, *Itinerarii spre lumea savant....*, p. 25.

Its world-view of scientific socialism notwithstanding, the RCP seemed to finally meet these long starved wishes of Romanian academia. Not only that it committed considerable funds to higher education and to the research-system as part of its cultural revolution, but now it wished to transform the existing system toward making it able to absorb the potential for research at the university level, as part of its proclaimed scientific-technological revolution and self-proclaimed national awakening. In fact, N. Ceaușescu's report at the Ninth Congress announced the *simultaneous* commitment of the regime to developing the conditions for scientific research in university and the imperative of a national reform of all levels education.¹⁹⁴ A project of the RCP's Executive Committee (since 1965, the former Politbureau) on "the continuous development of science" attempted to respond to the Ninth Congress' call for the improvement of scientific production. Subsequently, it formulated the synthesis between expansion of resources and acknowledgement of tradition:

Using the conditions created [by the communist regime], our scientists from the Academy, the most important scientific forum of our country, from higher education and the other research units continued and developed successfully the progressive traditions of their forefathers; they greatly contributed the resolution of complex problems of economic development and of national culture, to increasing the prestige of Romanian science abroad. The fields with the most significant tradition (mathematics, some branches of technical sciences, medicine, history, philology) have experienced sustained development during the period of popular democracy. The fame of the Romanian schools in these fields, which were founded scholars such as Gh. Titeica, D. Pompeiu, S. Soilov, Traian Vuia, Aurel Vlaicu, Dimitrie Leonida, Gh. Marinescu, I. Cantacuzino, Victor Babes, *Vasile Pârvan*, *N. Iorga*, *Sextil Puscariu*, *Ovid Densusianu* and many others, has been consolidated and enriched in the last twenty years through new and valuable scientific work. [my emphasis]¹⁹⁵

In order to fully understand why the University's role in the system of scientific research increased, a third element needs to be considered. The research materials produced by the DPC's Sector of Science and Art, also underlined that, in contrast to Romania, the Soviet Union, and

¹⁹⁴ Nicolae Ceaușescu, *Raport la Congresul al IX-lea...*, pp. 59-63.

¹⁹⁵ „Proiect. Dezvoltarea continuă a cercetărilor științifice...”, ff. 85-86. The names I italicized were officially rehabilitated at the beginning of the sixties, though they are present both in experts discussions and in DPC documents since the second half of the fifties.

other countries from the socialist camp, in “the most important capitalist countries”, the four-tier system had a different distribution of responsibilities in matters of research. It was pointed out that in places such France, England, the US, or Japan research was pursued *both* in the research and factory institutes *and* in higher-education. The party-state representatives in charge with drafting a new plan for the improvement of Romanian scientific research indicated the possibility of synthesis between the Soviet and the Western model. It should be remembered that Nicolae Ceaușescu, at the Ninth Party Congress, advanced the thesis of Romania’s backwardness accumulated before communism. His element of comparison was not the Soviet Union. The measuring stick became the West. On its autonomous path to socialism, the RCP drew inspiration from capitalist countries and this seemed to have influence the decision to grant an increasingly role in scientific research to the higher-education.¹⁹⁶ Unsurprisingly, as early as 1964, during the discussions about Romania’s economic, scientific, and cultural progress there was a recurrent theme of “Japan and we are the countries with the fastest growth rate in the world.”¹⁹⁷

Generally speaking, the role of universities in research was essentially perceived from the standpoint of further national integration. Or, using one of Mănescu’s comments on the draft of the RCP Executive Committee’s project, the goal was to establish “a flux Academy-Education Education-Academy.” According to this document, such a flux was necessary and possible because “higher-education, in contrast to other scientific institutions, by its very nature

¹⁹⁶ For the most extensive research material on the system of higher-education and on its responsibilities in various Western countries available in the archive of the Agitprop see the comprehensive, comparative study (for internal use only) done by the Ministry of Education in preparation for the new Law of Education passed in 1968. I did not include in my analysis these documents because they go beyond the scope of my research. See “Propuneri privind dezvoltarea învățământului în RSR”, July, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no. 40/1966.

¹⁹⁷ For example see academician Horia Hulubei (of the pre-1945 scientific personalities that supported the creation of the RPR Academy) or C. Popișteanu și S. Verona, „Răsfoind colecțiile presei străine”, *Lupta de clasă*, seria V, an XLIV (1964), nr. 8.

encompasses all fields of science, technology, and culture. This makes it the largest reservoir for research in our country, capable to approach a wide array of scientific topics.¹⁹⁸ In spite of this special status, only rarely did the universities' *catedras* coordinate the research agendas of their respective fields with those of the central institutions (i.e., the Academy). The consequence was that there was no concentration and unitary management of domestic activity on one topic or on one branch of science.¹⁹⁹ Such situation came into conflict with the RWP/RCP principle of domestic integration of science in order to reinforce its case for an autonomous path to building socialism and to counter intra-bloc initiatives of scientific integration and/or international division of epistemic labor. One last remark on the new role of the university based on the maximization of its potential is that, in 1965, a similar discussion took place in Poland. According to Rüegg and Sadlak, in Poland "it was felt that 'a modern socialist university' should be a hub radiating its influence over the whole educational system, a center for scientific discussion, and the untiring organizer of ever more specialized scientific disciplines."²⁰⁰ Both in Romanian and Poland, this reconsideration of the role of University in relation with scientific production generated variations from the original Soviet model. In Romania, the new structure of research and higher education will be established only after the passing of the new law of education and after the 1969/1970 reform of the RSR Academy.

3. The National Council for Scientific Research and the Academy

¹⁹⁸ „Proiect. Dezvoltarea continuă a cercetărilor științifice...”, f. 99.

¹⁹⁹ „Prezetarea programului geenral al cercetării științifice pe anul 1966 și a temelor propuse spre includere în planul de stat”, 24 decembrie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no. 34/1965, f. 147

²⁰⁰ Walter Rüegg and Jan Sadlak, “Relations with Authority” in Walter Ruegg (gen. ed.), *A History of University in Europe. Vol IV. Universities since 1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 102.

Between 1959 and 1960, there appeared the idea of creating a Council for the Orientation, Guidance, and Coordination of Research in the RPR (COGCR), which main function would be to coordinate, rationalize, and unify planned science. After more than five years, this institution was created in December 1966, under the name of the National Council for Scientific Research (NCSR). The NCSR was modeled after the Soviet State Committee of the Council of Ministers for the Coordination of Scientific Research (SSCSR) founded in 1961 and later transformed into the State Committee of the Council of Ministers for Science and Technology (1965 - SCST). The responsibilities of the NCSR copied those of its Soviet homologue from 1961. Its overall purpose was that of coordination of all scientific activity in the country; the direct management of the research units of the tutelary institutions (Academy, economic departments, Ministry of Education). Its main functions were:

- a) drawing the guidelines for scientific research in close connection with the necessity of the national economy and culture's development
- b) coordinating plans of scientific research of the RSR Academy, the Ministry of Education and of the economic ministries in order to optimally use the scientific potential of the country, to concentrate it upon the major problems of our economy and culture
- c) drafting studies and proposals concerning the possibilities of endowing research institutes with up to date laboratory technology; the organization of the rational use of the material basis of scientific research
- d) the endorsement of the yearly plans and the long-term plans of scientific research, which are part and parcel of the state plan
- e) preparing and presenting proposals for the improvement of the profile and network of the units of scientific research in accordance with the developmental requirements of the national economy, science, and culture; the allocation of research funds to the central institutions
- f) the supervision of the manner in which the results of the research institutes are capitalized upon
- g) the formation and rational employment of scientific cadres. The organization of the researchers' specialization, both inside the country and abroad.
- h) the coordination of domestic scientific events and of the participation of Romanian scientists to international scholarly events
- i) drafting studies and reports on various facets of the existing scientific activity
- j) creating proposals for laws concerning the coordination of scientific research
- k) the preparation of periodical reports on its activity to the Council of Ministers²⁰¹

²⁰¹ „Dezvoltarea cercetării științifice”, ff. 49-50. For an earlier version of the responsibilities of the NCSR see „Direcțiile principale ale activității științifice în perioada 1960-1965...”, f. 125.

In order to be able to fulfill such an ambitious list of responsibilities, the NCSR was made up of a number of scientific committees specialized on various branches of national science and culture. They brought together around 150 scientists, professors, managers of central institutions interested in research, and the chiefs of the most important economic units. These specialized committees debated and proposed measures for the long-term development of research in their respective disciplines. For each of them there was a president, one or two vice-presidents, and a secretary. NCSR's activity was administered by an Executive Bureau that comprised 33 scientists, officials with high positions in the state apparatus, leading managers of the economy. The Executive Bureau was made up of a president (first vice-president or vice-president of the Council of Ministers), 7 vice-presidents, 1 general secretary and other members. The presidents of the specialized commission were members of the Executive Bureau. If it considered necessary, the NCSR could request institutions such as the Academy or various ministries reports or studies on specific issues related to research and its application into practice. It could also create task-forces on certain pressing issues and even scientific units of general interests for Romanian science or for only a number of institutions (e.g., the National Center for Documentation).²⁰²

During the NCSR's first plenum, the RCP general secretary, Nicolae Ceaușescu, emphasized the creation of this supra-institutional body represented the "beginning of a new path" for Romanian science. The meaning on the new road taken lay in the fact that

we must do everything in our powers so that science would contribute to our society's development and, first and foremost, to the development of our society's material basis. Either applied or fundamental ... scientific research must serve society, must provide for its advancement, because, in my opinion, regardless of how we call one facet or another of science, if it does not serve society and its progress *it is not science*. [my emphasis]²⁰³

²⁰² *Idem*, ff. 51-52.

²⁰³ „Cuvîntarea tovarășului Nicolae Ceaușescu, secretar general al CC al PCR, la lucrările primei ședințe plenare a Consiliului Național al Cercetării Științifice...”, f. 93.

The creation of the NCSR generated the re-definition of the role of science. As Ceaușescu's pronouncements clearly show, science was conceptualized now in an essentially pragmatic manner. It did not suffice anymore that scientific-production internalized the values of the communist regime. It had to constantly demonstrate its utility in the project of building socialism in Romania. At the same time though, the core principle of Marxist-Leninist politics of knowledge was reinforced: science did not exist in itself; knowledge constituted science only in so far as it sustained the building of the Stalinist civilization. Only that now, the latter was circumscribed within a set of priorities formulated upon national interest, authenticity, and tradition. This point was further strengthened by Ceaușescu's definition of the cardinal, immediate priority of the NCSR's activity: "a five-year plan for scientific research, closely connected to the economic plan for the country's general development in the following five years."²⁰⁴ At the general session of the RSR Academy, in April 1966, when he was still the Academy's President, Ilie Murgulescu warned about the danger of a return to the early years of the existence of this body under communism: "Some years ago, the Academy's institutes suffered from their first severe and lasting affliction: narrow focus on practicalness (*practicism*). Let us hope that the Academy has immunized itself from this dangerous pathogen (*morb*) and that it will not relapse to it."²⁰⁵ Indeed, considering that the 1964 Declaration declared that the core element of national sovereignty was the independence of planning, the creation of the NCSR basically officialized the total integration of science into the RCP's vision of an autonomous path to socialism. Science had become synonymous to sovereignty, which in its turn meant the practice of constructing socialism.

²⁰⁴ *Idem*, f. 91.

²⁰⁵ Ilie Murgulescu, "Concluzii la lucrările Adunării Generale a Academiei RSR", in *Analele Academiei Republicii Socialiste România...*, p. 288.

An important specificity of the Romanian case is that, despite its emulation of the Soviet model, the post-1965 evolution in this country differed from that of the Moscow center.²⁰⁶ In the USSR, the transformation of the Soviet State Committee of the Council of Ministers for the Coordination of Scientific Research into the State Committee of the Council of Ministers for Science and Technology created a two-headed system, as the latter body complemented the activity of the Soviet Academy of Sciences. As Vucinich remarked,

the interpreters of the new regulation quickly became accustomed to treating the two agencies as coequal – one in charge of pure research and the other working in the general area of the flow of scientific knowledge to the national economy in the broadest sense....The Academy became the main source of designs for new centers of scientific inquiry and for involving the periphery in basic research.²⁰⁷

In Romania, the NCSR was created not only with the purpose of better coordination of the planning of science. It also meant further centralization of scientific production. The Academy was subordinated to the NCSR. Again, Ilie Murgulescu noticed the difference between the Romanian situation and the Soviet one. In his concluding remarks at the 1966 April general session, he duly observed:

Applied research, especially into production, constitutes a problem that is sometimes much more difficult than research itself and more intricate than we would expect by looking at the situation from a distance [...] In the Soviet Union...the old State Committee for science [SSCSR, n.a.], which had a series of responsibilities (guidance, coordination, organization, research, etc.) narrowed its activity, abandoning many of its duties in order to maintain only one: the capitalization of research in order to apply it in production. Today the State Committee for science in the Soviet Union [SCST, n.a.] had only one responsibility that is exercised in the field of industry [...] The other matters concerning coordination, collaboration, etc., are left in the care of the Academy and its departments. The Academy exercises the tasks related to the management of research over its institutes and over all republican academies, as well as over the institutes of higher-education.²⁰⁸

²⁰⁶ For an instructive, detailed analysis of the structure of the system of planned science in the Soviet Union between 1960 and early seventies see Lena Jonson, "Coordinating and Planning Sociological Research in the Soviet Union," *Acta Sociologica*, Vol. 21, No. 2 (1978), pp. 181-191.

²⁰⁷ Vucinich, *Empire of Knowledge*, p. 304. Also see Loren R. Graham, *Science in Russia and the Soviet Union: A Short History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 184-185.

²⁰⁸ Ilie Murgulescu, "Concluzii...", pp. 297-298.

Murgulescu, a dignitary of the scientific front well versed in the practices and programs of the communist regime in Romania, anticipated the danger lurking behind the reform of science. He seems to have understood that the NCSR, as it had been created in December 1965 and justified through the speeches of the RCP General Secretary, was not just an attempt to emulate the new transformations in this area in the Soviet Union. He saw that coordination also meant hyper-centralization and the subordination of the Academy.²⁰⁹

The trend of hyper-centralization will be accentuated into the seventies, as the NCSR was transformed into the National Council for Science and Technology (NCST), which in 1985 was further transformed into the National Council for Science, Technology, and Education (NCSTE) – a mega-structure that organized both science and education.²¹⁰ Furthermore, as the Romanian communist regime increasingly defined its unity and identity upon the personality of the Leader, science itself was subordinated to the cult. Ceaușescu's wife, Elena will become the president of the NCST/NCSTE (1979-1989). The practice of hyper-centralization of scientific research created a fertile ground for the regression to the Stalinist syndrome of “the coryphaeus of science.” At the same time, as discussed in the first chapter, the Academy will increasingly lose its centrality in this evolving system of planned science. Between 1969 and 1970, most of the Academy's institutes were re-assigned to the newly founded Academy of Medical Sciences, Academy of Agricultural Sciences, and the Academy of Social and Political Sciences. Under the

²⁰⁹ One should not forget that, during Dej's rule, when the first discussions about COGCR ensued, he showed reluctance to the project. At the same time, it is interesting that in April 1966 he lost his position as President of the Academy.

²¹⁰ Another example of the trend of hyper-centralization of knowledge as a consequence of the party's proclamation of an autonomous road to socialism was the creation, in 1976, of the Council for Socialist Culture and Education (CSCE), which was given the mission to “guide and coordinate any cultural and educational activity” of the country so that it would “ensure the fulfillment of the party's cultural policies.” Just like the bodies discussed above, CSCE was subordinated to the Central Committee and to the Council of Ministers. See “Controlul social în perioada ceaușista,” in Tismaneanu et al., *Raport Final*, pp. 400-401.

circumstances, since the beginning of the seventies, the Academy will greatly narrow its activities, becoming more and more an honorary body.²¹¹

In 1965, however, the Academy's situation was far from bleak. On the contrary, it was entering in its most prosperous period under the communist regime. As I have shown already, the number of academicians (full, standing, or honorary) increased to such a degree that the Academy became the second largest in the socialist camp. At the same time, the DPC listed 45 percent of the full or standing members of the Academy as party members. Upon announcing this number, the respective document concluded that "the scientists represent a unified detachment of our country's intellectuals that is devoted to our party's cause and which brought positive contributions to the process of building socialism."²¹² The fear of reactionary contamination had seemingly faded into the background. Both the Academy and the Party were engaged in building "the radiant future" of the Romanian socialist nation-state.

From 1956 onwards, there was a steady, but in no way irreversible, cumulative decision-making that ultimately transformed the Academy into the most important national institution of scientific research. However, the structure of this institution's leadership was yet to correspond to the RCP's vision. There were four issues of dissatisfaction: qualification, age, nationality, and party membership. In the Academy's sixty seven units of research, there were 493 cadres with decision-making positions. Of them seventy-seven were directors or deputy directors, 123 were chiefs of section and 293 were chiefs of sectors. Of the total of decision-makers only 112 were academicians. Besides them, of the rest, 215 had the title of doctor of science or had a PhD. Therefore, approximately one third of the Academy's leadership did not have the appropriate

²¹¹ Berindei, *Istoria Academiei*, pp. 379-380.

²¹² „Direcțiile principale ale activității științifice în perioada 1960-1965...”, f. 113.

qualifications. This situation will be mended starting with the passing of legislation in 1967 concerning the mechanisms of getting a PhD in the Romanian academic system (Decree 1058).

The second problem was the advanced age of the Academy's decision-makers. This matter had been discussed since the end of the fifties, but, in the absence of elections in the Academy (until 1963), it was yet to be resolved.²¹³ The proportion of members of the leadership with an age of over 60 was of 23 percent. The number went as high as 50 percent in the ranks of directors and deputy directors. This situation will partially change through the increase in the number of academicians as a result of a series of elections between 1963 and 1966. At the same time, the creation of regulations which allowed for standing members, many of them younger cadres, to hold leadership positions in the Academy's research units alleviated to a certain extent this 'age-crisis'. Comparatively, the Academy was in a better position in what concerned the party membership of its directors and deputy directors (75 percent). What was considered unsatisfactory was the proportion of party members among the chiefs of sectors, who generally were younger individuals. Among them 136 were party members, 144 with no party affiliation, and 13 had been excluded from the party. This picture was possible because of the limited autonomy that Academy had acquired in the previous years, making possible for one individual to be proficient in his scientific work without being compelled to join the party. At the same time, however, it also indicated that the regime could accept the services of a scholar on the scientific front as long as its activity was beneficial or corresponded to the goals set up by the party in the various research fields. In 1965, once the RWP changed its name into the RCP the regulations for entering the party were relaxed making it easier for willing individuals to obtain

²¹³ Manea Mănescu, „Informare privind adunarea generală anuală a Academiei RPR”, 13 februarie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.7/1965, ff. 49-53.

membership (e.g., the elimination of the level of candidate member).²¹⁴ By the beginning of the seventies, though, it was increasingly difficult to hold decision-making positions in the structures of the party-state without a party card.

The DPC's overview of the nationality situation within the ranks of the Academy's leadership sheds light into the deep dynamics of the Romanian communist regime. As many authors have mentioned, by late fifties and early sixties, the party pursued a steady policy of Romanian-ization of its ranks and of the state structures. I already discussed documents from 1958 to 1962 regarding the national proportion of the cadres involved both in the system of planned science and of higher-education. I pointed out to the fact that since those years the party was concerned with the attaining a correct national distribution that would reflect the situation within the country population. Of course, this also generated a consolidation of the Romanian core on the scientific front. What is surprising in the statistics of 1965 regarding the Academy's leadership that, in contrast to earlier ones, a new nationality appears - the Jews. Out of 493 members of the leadership, 396 were Romanians, 63 were Jews, 19 were Hungarians, 4 Germans, and 6 of other nationalities. Of the 77 directors and deputy directors, 11 were Jews, 3 Hungarians, one German, and 2 were Russian. Of the 293 chiefs of sectors, 47 were Jews, 12 Hungarians, 3 Germans, and 3 of other nationalities. This national composition was deemed unsatisfactory.²¹⁵

If one takes into account only the proportion of Hungarians and Germans, it is obvious that not even these numbers correspond to their national distribution within Romania's

²¹⁴ For a complete account of the variations in the regulations concerning party membership see Robert King, *The History of the Romanian Communist Party*, (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1980). For example, from 1,518,000 members in 1965, the party jumped to 2,577,434 in 1975.

²¹⁵ For all of the above data see „Notă privind situația cadrelor de conducere din unitățile de cercetare ale Academiei RSR”, 23 mai, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no. 16/1966, ff. 55-58, „Referat privind unele probleme în legătură cu îmbunătățirea organizării Academiei RSR”, 24 ianuarie, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no. 16/1966, ff. 10-15.

population. Though the DPC document does not specify this, it is clear that the nationality which was targeted were the Jews. Both Dej and Ceaușescu constructed self-legitimizing discourses of vanquishing party elements foreign to (*alogeni*) and estranged from (*înstrăinați*) the Romanian people. Their anti-Comintern diatribes were constructed around characters that more often than not belonged to national minorities. What is even more surprising is that, according to Vladimir Tismaneanu, “most of Romanian Jewish communists abjured their background and proudly severed all links with their ancestors’ traditions. They were, to use Isaac Deutscher’s term, ‘non-Jewish Jews’.”²¹⁶ This statement could explain the absence of ‘the Jew’ as a nationality category from earlier statistics I worked with. By mid-sixties, Jewish-ness was re-assigned in order to more efficiently achieve the Romanianization of the system of planned science. One could go as far as saying that the communist party aimed at reestablishing a *numerus clausus* within Romanian epistemic communities.²¹⁷

One conclusion I would like to advance on the basis of this brief overview of the Academy during mid-sixties is that the various statistics available regarding the profile and evolution of its membership seem to reveal a certain level of apprehension toward this institution on the party side. The Academy successfully managed to navigate the turbulent waters of the second half of the fifties, emerging as a trusted partner of the communist leadership. But, simultaneously, it had a deeply entrenched membership that could make it potentially difficult for the RCP to implement new politics of science. At the same time, the party had gradually developed a much more nationally centric vision of the Romanian planned science. The remaining ethnic diversity within the Academy seemed to bother the leadership. Moreover, a better proportion of party membership within the lower ranks of the Academy would have

²¹⁶ Tismaneanu, *Stalinism for All Seasons*, p. 76.

²¹⁷ I am grateful to professor Vladimir Tismaneanu and Balazs Trencsenyi for their comments on this specific topic.

allowed a better control of the application of the party line. All in all, by the end of the sixties, the party asked for younger Romanian faces and more party members. It remains to be seen, but one possible explanation for the upheaval within the system of planned science in the first half of the seventies could be the imperative of uprooting a deeply consolidated institution in order to better mold science to the party program. In other words, the years in question might have represented the coming of a second *Gleichschaltung*, or to use Richard Evans' phrase, a "forcible coordination"²¹⁸ by the Romanian party-state. However, as my analysis of the 1958-1966 period showed, one must never underestimate the pervasiveness of continuity in the policies of the communist regime in Romania.

4. What Can We Use History For?

The first NCSR president was Roman Moldovan (until 1967), standing member of the Academy, former president of the State Committee for Planification. In his intervention during the 1966 April session of the Academy, Moldovan sketched what he called "the criteria according to which we establish priorities, we will create hierarchies for the themes and problems of research." He listed the following counts

first, ...to which degree the thematic content, that is the subject of research, responds and is linked to contemporary issues of the economy or to the requirements of science and culture; [...]; second, we need to tie this thematic content to the material possibilities that exist or that are anticipated in the future and, of course, to the present human resources and the possibilities of documentation; [...] third, we have to evaluate each topic on the basis of its immediate results and longer term effects; [...] fourth, what prospects does this subject have for its finalization...in the sense that the obtained results can be used for our economy or culture; [...] five, we must eliminate parallelisms and the dispersion of the forces of research; [...] and six, ... an extremely important criterion... the extent to which the proposed topic allows us to continue and expand research in fields of study where there is a rich tradition of Romanian science.²¹⁹

²¹⁸ Richard J. Evans, *The Coming of the Third Reich* (New York/London: Penguin Books, 2003).

²¹⁹ See Roman Moldovan's intervention during discussions at the General Session of the RSR Academy in April 1966 in *Analele Academiei Republicii Socialiste România...*, p. 281

What was the place and role of history in this fundamentally utilitarian interpretative framework of science? During the Academy's April session, the president of the section of historical science, C. Daicoviciu, voiced his concerns: "I cannot hold myself from sharing an impression with you that lately the historical science did not enjoy, at least at the beginning of this period [after the Ninth Congress] the attention that it deserves, or at least to the degree that we [historians] would want to." He did not worry about the scientific character of history itself. On the contrary, he considered that its 'scientificity' was confirmed by the latter's ancientness and by the classics of Marxism. Nevertheless, what concerned him was the pragmatic abilities of history:

Is history useful? Does it help with the increase of production? Is history a necessary science that must be funded through material means? Is it particularly serviceable (*trebuincioasă*) for the building of socialism, of a happier life for man and implicitly for our kin (*neam*)? [...] Is our science of history only a form of research, let's say fundamental? Is it only an abstract science, theoretical, serving only the art of knowing in itself or the urge of satisfying one's curiosity? Or, is it our history, too, a scientific history with profound applied value? I am convinced that the answer to the last question is yes. And I am convinced that history has the greatest importance for human society as long as man will be on Earth. History – is true – teaches us, it enlightens our minds, it gives man his self consciousness by making known to him his past. But history does more than that. It educates and it mobilizes, it instills in the working man the love for his fields, the love for his factory, for the work and activity that he performs at the workplace, that is, for his Motherland.²²⁰

What had been formulated only scatteredly between 1959 and 1964, was now enunciated almost in a manifesto style. History-production was inextricably and vitally (for the survival of the epistemic community itself) linked to the identity-building project of the communist regime. And, as shown previously, this was far from being a foreign way of self-conceptualization. In fact, this had been the traditional way of defining the role of history, as a discipline, in the Romanian modern nation-state. In much subtler fashion, historian Al. Zub, in the last year of the

²²⁰ See C. Daicoviciu's intervention at the discussions during the RSR Academy's session from April 6-9, 1966 in *Analele Academiei Republicii Socialiste România...*, p. 194.

communist regime, provided his own answer to the dilemma over the role of the historian and of history in society:

the value of history, N. Iorga once said, lies in ‘the interpretations’ advanced by the historian. They originate from ‘his general conception’ about ‘the mission of his science, the ends which he had to serve, the paths that he has to follow, as well as the meaning with which his discipline was endowed.’ The historian’s dependence on the ‘history’ he had to write in is beyond doubt...²²¹

Indeed, once more, starting with 1964, the utility of history-production lay in its ability to provide interpretations about national destiny; the centrality of it as science lay in its palingenetic mission. To paraphrase Zub, the ‘history’ Romanian historians wrote in was now a medium of competitive re-invention of the Nation. Or to use Katherine Verdery’s description, it was a ‘history’ in which “regardless of who said what, all groups were responsible for recreating the Nation [...] a veritable coproduction.”²²²

During the April 1966 session, C. Dacoviciu received a tongue-in-cheek answer from fellow academician, Athanasie Joja:

Historians are people with whom you always have to be on good terms. Somebody once said “Historians are more powerful than the gods, because the gods cannot change history, they are prisoners to destiny – *fatum* – but historians can. If they give a bad report on an individual in the annals, it is no way good thing for that person. [...] History surely raises questions. It a science sui-generis...History wants to know the actual event. [...] I want to put his [Daicoviciu’s, n.a.] fears to rest. History is useful, and its utility is strictly necessary and I anticipate that it will continue to be of our concern.”²²³

Joja’s, a former President of the Academy and Minister of Education, instrumentalist reading of the purpose of history reveals a general perception of pragmatism in relation to history as science under communism. His view was confirmed by the RCP leader’s own understanding of the problem. In the previous section I already quoted Ceaușescu’s definition of a “scientific history”.

²²¹ Zub, *Istorie și istorici...*, p. 315.

²²² Verdery, *National Ideology...*, p. 313.

²²³ See Athanasie Joja’s intervention during discussions at the General Session of the RSR Academy in April 1966 in *Analele Academiei Republicii Socialiste România...*, p. 239.

He was convinced that both national and party history needed considerable re-writing, for they suffered from wide gaps of interpretation or from perpetuated falsifications. At a meeting in May 1966 between the party leadership and the members of the Academy's Presidium, Ceaușescu bluntly declared that the upcoming discussions about the structure of the National History Museum (still work in progress at the time) "will help us to clarify even more problems of our country's history, for our history is riddled with gaps, with untruths. History of the Romanians has been presented in so many ways (*în fel și chip*) that is necessary to place things as they really happened."²²⁴

Two complementary facets of history as useful science appear out of the above remarks. On the one hand, the hyper-Rankean belief in the reconstitutive ability of history on the basis of accumulation of facts as proofs was one source. The second was the conviction that history sustained the Nation as identity, community, and mobilizing principle. In this reading, the confirmation of the self by means of historical truth produced the ascendant movement of the collective in the present toward the future. Again, Ceaușescu gave historians the benefit of a comprehensive formulation of the phenomenon:

In continuing this activity [the publication of works about the history of the Motherland, n.a.] of greatest significance, the most important stages and events of the history of our country and of the Romanians, must be better understood, from the positions of historical materialism, in order to mirror facts in an objective fashion in full reflection of reality. [...] The knowledge of the masses about the glorious history of the Motherland, about the numerous examples of courage and heroism in the struggle of social and national liberation, of gaining and defending independence during centuries will prove truly useful in elevating the social-political consciousness, the patriotic education of the builders of socialism²²⁵

²²⁴ „Stenograma întâlnirii conducerii PCR cu membrii prezidiului Academiei” (27 mai 1966) in Pavelescu and Dumitru (coord.), *PCR și intelectualii...*, p. 85.

²²⁵ N. Ceaușescu quoted in „Însemnătatea istorică a Congresului al IX-lea al Partidului Comunist Român”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, nr.4, anul XVIII, 1965, p. 783.

One additional matter that needs to be emphasized is that as early as 1965, Ceaușescu talked about both the history of Romania and the history of Romanians. This discursive artifice revealed his identification with a more continuous, unitary, and organic conceptualization of the national community across time and space. The third facet of the utility of history was formulated, just like the previous ones, in a narrative of self-determination. On May 7, 1965, at the first meeting between the new party-state leadership and Romanian scientists, the director of the Academy's History Institute in Bucharest, A. Oțetea, talked, among other things, about the necessity of recuperating N Iorga's tradition of writing national history in the context of universal history. And as we have seen with the case of the Southeastern Europe studies project, up to a certain point such invocations did mean a de-parochialization of the discipline. However, they also meant taking the struggle over and the master-narrative about the Nation onto the international stage. A. Oțetea clearly expressed this facet of the utility and relevance of history:

...when it is being discussed at international congresses, such as the one from last year in Budapest, or the Congress in Vienna, in New York, where the subject of our country's political orientation is analyzed, we must be ever more active in the field of international history. [...] we must be present abroad in order to defend our rights and the prestige of our country, in order to be up to date with what is being done abroad in matters that concern our problems.²²⁶

Under the circumstances of the creation and gradual accentuation of a system of planned science fundamentally based upon utilitarianism and pragmatism in reference to the construction of socialism in Romania, the historical front found three ways in which to apply its production to the general ethos of self-determination advocated by the communist regime. It first contended that it could reconstitute the past, that it could create a mirror of the Nation across history. Second, it defined itself as a national science that created and reinforced the glue of the people's community, thus giving the *Volksgemeinschaft* the élan of consciously building its socialist

²²⁶ The kept the incoherence of the original text from Romanian. See "Stenograma întâlnirii noii conduceri de partid și de stat cu oamenii de știință" (7 mai 1965) in Pavelescu and Dumitru (eds.), *PCR și intelectualii...*, pp. 16-17.

future. And third, it extolled its scientific utility by offering services of international advocacy in the world completion for prestige and polity consecration. Last but not least, historical materialism had always remained at the core of history-production, offering history, as Daicovicu mentioned, the confirmation of scientificity on the side of the classics of Marxism. Ironically, this re-assertion of purpose, meaning, and direction for the historical front also meant a wide rehabilitation of tradition both by method and name. Many of the contemporary elements of the field's self-definition had their counterpart or were of direct inspiration from pre-1945 practice of history writing in Romania. By 1966, the historical front had fully identified with the cardinal principle of the new system of planned science: "a nation's contribution to knowledge in the world can only be measured in the material and spiritual values that she produces, by her share in bringing progress and civilization."²²⁷ History became statecraft braiding the mantle of the Romanian vanguard nation onto the world stage.

²²⁷ Nicolae Ceaușescu, „Cuvânt de salut la sesiunea solemnă consacrată sărbătorii centenarului Academiei R.S.R.”, (http://www.cnsas.ro/documente/istoria_comunism/), p. 31.

VII

A New Canon of History-Production

A. Themes and Tasks of History-Production in Mid-Sixties

In mid-January 1965, the RWP's Section on Science and Art drafted a report on history-production since the second half of 1960 up to that year. The authors were historians, all of them party members. Two of them were chiefs of sectors at the Institute of Archeology in Bucharest (M. Comşa) and the Institute for Historical and Social-Political Studies (D. Hurezeanu). The third one was the general secretary of the editorial board of the national history treatise (N. Fotino). The first two had PhDs from Lomonosov University in Moscow (Comşa in 1956, Hurezeanu in 1958), while the third one had been in the thick of the historical front's tribulations from early fifties onwards, one of its veterans, a victim of the bringing into the line of historians in 1958.¹ The coordinator of the group was I. Răduţiu from the part of the CC Section. Before being submitted to Manea Mănescu and N. Ceauşescu, the report had been reviewed and improved by some of the most high profile names of the historical front: C. Daicoviciu, A. Oţetea, P. Constantinescu-Iaşi, E. Condurachi, I. Nestor, Gh. Ştefan, M. Berza, I. Puţuri, Gh. Zaharia, E. Stănescu. With few exceptions, these historians, in 1965, headed the various institutions of their respective epistemic community: the Academy's Section, the Bucharest Institute, the National Committee of Romanian Historians, the Institute of Archeology, the

¹Comşa was one of the exponents of the thesis of a Romanian-Bulgarian archeological civilization. Hurezeanu was expert on agrarian relations during the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th and, more importantly, on Dobrogeanu-Gherea, one of the founders of Romanian socialism. The latter had been increasingly rehabilitated up to mid-sixties, to the extent that his omnipresence in Ceauşescu's speeches. Fotino was expert on international relations during the First World War and its aftermath.

History Departments from Bucharest and Cluj, the Institute for Southeastern European Studies, the Institute of Party History, the journals *Studii* and *Anale*. At the beginning of 1965, the Central Committee was not interested anymore on 'healthy social origins'. It was more concerned about what had been achieved and what had to be done the future. As we have seen earlier with C. Daicoviciu's intervention in early 1966, the historical front had entered into a sort of limbo because of the succession at the top of the RCP. From 1964 to 1965, it will have to clarify its 'fundamentals' in order to adjust to the utilitarian and pragmatic vision of history-production on the side of the communist leadership. However, this accommodation was not a break. It was rather a crystallization of past tendencies – taking the writing of national history a step further from the history of Romania to that of the Romanians, from the history of the state to that of the nation-state.

The starting point of this review of almost five years of historiography under communism was the confirmation of a successful integration of the epistemic community in the regime's politics of science:

The extensive debates organized [in the past] by the RPR Academy and the history departments focused on the main problems of our country, on the archeological digs, on the research done in domestic archives or abroad. They allowed deeper insight into the core of the historical phenomena, the elevation of the level of research, the widening of the historical front by engaging a large number of professors from the mid-level education system. The competence of researchers has increased. New ones were educated, younger, better prepared cadres that stay alongside with well-known scientists. Our historiography asserted itself more actively at the international congresses and conferences, advocating, in a documented fashion, viewpoints that have been adopted by many participants [from other countries, n.a.]...²

The historical front had asserted itself as a source of knowledge, (re-)education, and of international proselytism. The report's pages that follow provide a review of what had been accomplished in terms of publications. I will not dwell on these matters, for I discussed in

² „Referat de sinteză privind cercetarea științifică în domeniul istoriei”; Anexă „Lucrări de istorie apărute din anul 1960 (a doua jumătate) până în prezent”, 16 ianuarie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.7/1965, f. 4.

previous chapters the dynamics of history-production from 1960 to 1964. However, what I consider significant is the report's clarification of the structure and periodization of the project for a national history treatise:

the review of the new accomplishments in the scientific study of the evolution of the historical process on the territory of our Motherland finds expression in the publication of the first four volumes of the treatise *Istoria României*, the printing of the second draft of volume five and the creation of the manuscript for volume six. [...] The treatise presented in a unitary fashion the history of the three Romanian countries, while also integrating the history of Romania in the universal history establishing our people's role in European civilization. [...] First and foremost, the work at the treatise must be continued and finalized: the completion of volume five (1878-1918), the publishing of the draft of volume six (1918-August 23, 1944), the preparation of writing of volume seven, as well as the publication of improved editions to the first four volumes...³

In the end none of what was projected will happen. The remaining volumes will not be finalized as the very idea of "history of Romania" will be replaced with that of "history of the Romanians". At the same time, the cardinal premise upon which volumes five and six were built, the political illegitimacy of the Romanian nation-state, will be rejected.

What needs to be emphasized here is that this review of the historical-front was requested *before* the death of Gheorghiu-Dej (March 19, 1965). So, in spite of the fact that the treatise project ultimately fell through, the general guidelines for history-production advanced by this report will remain in place during Ceaușescu. The new leadership will make sure that these recommendations will be further accommodated to the priorities of the party line. The first of the guidelines with great significance was:

...the critical reconsideration of old historiography (we only began the publication of the thematic synthesis of the future volume of the treatise that will deal with historiography in Romania); on problems of theory of history there are only few articles...It is imperative to critically reconsider the important historians of the past – A. D. Xenopol, N. Iorga, D. Onciul, V. Pârvan, the study of our Marxist historiography during the inter-war period, as well as the writing of a synthetic work on the development of historiography in Romania as volume eight of the treatise.⁴

³ *Idem*, f. 4 and f. 12

⁴ *Idem*, f. 12.

Before the report, historians Șt. Pascu and E. Stănescu had already published in the first issue of *Studii* in 1964 the structure of this future monograph on history of historiography. From 1964 to 1966, in each issue, the journal will host comments on the configuration proposed by the two authors. The debate (see below) will lead to an overshoot effect: Pascu and Stănescu's plan, approved by the DPC, will be greatly expanded in the comments of other historians, bringing into discussion positive evaluations of most of the Romanian historians, from the end of the 19th century onwards. At the same time, these discussions officialized a national agenda of writing history directly rooted in pre-communist traditions.

The reconsideration of individual historians from the past will only consolidate the front politics of founding-father-ism, which main result was adding a national facet to what Brian Kassof called "Stalinist epistemology". Intelligibility was the past was achieved on the shoulders of the classics, thus avoiding rigid definitions and leaving a permanent space for further interpretative maneuvering. Another guideline of the report that can be associated to these matters was the general recommendation that "greater attention must be given to problems of culture, especially those from the inter-war period so that we can begin working on a large monograph dedicated to the history of culture in Romania to which an extensive collective would work on."⁵ The half-hearted or still limited attempts to rehabilitate the central figures of 20th century culture that existed until 1963 will be accelerated and greatly expanded from 1964 onwards. A flurry of monographs will be generated that created significant differentiations of various fields of Romanian scholarship in the humanities.

Another guideline that stood out concerned the issue of foreign policy:

The necessity of studying in a larger, more organized, context Romania's foreign policy, especially in relation to significant world event such as the beginning and the evolution of the

⁵ *Idem*, f. 13

Second World War, or in reference to some aspects of foreign relations that directly concern our country: the Anglo-French “guarantees”, the German-Soviet treatise, the Vienna Diktat etc. We must also research the diplomatic activity of N. Titulescu, European figure of Romanian diplomacy.⁶

By 1964, Romanian historians already had reached a version of the Romania’s involvement into the Second World War that was very nationally-centered to the extent of exceptionalist narratives. The matter of the international treatises was central topic as well. N Titulescu had been subject of an article by Constantinescu-Iași in 1963. On all three issues, the following years will only bring more monographic work as well as more perseverance in building a national interpretation of the events. A related guideline was the focus on the history of the Romanian modern state:

...in order to understand Romania’s political development, the relations and the distribution of class forces, it is required that we draft monographs and volumes of documents about the revolutionary tradition of our people such as the 1848 revolution, the peasant revolts of 1888 and 1907 etc, as well as monographs about the origins and the development of the landowners-bourgeois regime, the history of political parties....about significant events that led to the development of the country, such as the agrarian reform of 1864, the war of independence (1877-1878). A history of the First World War would also bring important clarifications regarding the nature of Romania’s participation, the position of various classes and political groups toward the war, and the problems of the fulfillment of national unity, of the movement for the unification of Transylvania with Romania.⁷

One needs to point out here that there already existed collections of documents or monographs (or collected volumes) on some of the topics listed (1848 revolution, the peasant revolts, the war of independence, or the First World War). However, what this list of tasks indicated was the *reconsideration* of Romania’s modern history on the basis of the principles of national unity, progress, and emancipation. The history of the modern and contemporary period had now to rehabilitate the basic elements of the nation-state.

⁶ *Idem* 5.

⁷ *Idem* 5.

In contrast to pre-1964 period (though some tendencies in this direction can be noticed), after the April Declaration, the RCP increasingly situated the communist polity within the Romanian nation-state tradition. This shift was also expressed in the recommendation for monographs about the state during feudalism (either the early formations or the centralized ones) or about ‘great’ leaders (Mircea the Old, Michael the Brave, or Stephen the Great). Further research was required on the topic of the Dacian state, of ethnogenesis, and on the earliest traits of human life on the territory of Romania. Additionally, the study of universal history was emphasized along with the recommendation that historians learn languages of international circulation and the languages in which the original documents of their respective fields were written. The report pointed out to the negative aspects that had existed on the historical front too: “there was a lack of scientific objectivity because of the uncritical borrowing of various analyses of foreign historiography. [...] The research of some events in the history of the Motherland overestimated sometimes the role of the external factor at the expense of showing the defining character of the internal factor.”⁸ It was no surprise that the examples chosen concerned either the relationship with the Slavs or with Russia. These remarks echoed the findings of the Ministry of Education’s control-commissions about the curricula of higher-education.

One general conclusion that it could be drawn from this report is that despite indications about the study of the peasantry, of culture, or of the forces of production, the fundamental emphasis was on the *political* history of the Nation with the implicit onus placed on the state tradition.⁹ The sense of mission and destiny that had grown within the party ranks and among the

⁸ *Idem*, f. 11.

⁹ See for example the two extensive articles published in *Studii* in 1964 about the tradition and the objectives of the study of the Romanian state and of its legal history: Vl. Hanga, „Cercetările din RPR privind istoria statului și dreptului din țara noastră (1948-1963) (I)”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, nr.1, anul XVII, 1964, pp. 117-132 and Vl.

leadership and which was apparent during the discussions caused by the adoption of an autonomous position within the world communist movement would be mirrored in history production. The national, moral, political, social, and economic unity of the popular community around the party leadership would be legitimized genealogically. The historical front had to stress the continuity of the body politic, that is, the nation-state (or the ideal in its various incarnations that supposedly binded Romanians together throughout their history). Since mid-sixties, the principle of the unitary state formation of the Romanians was officially proclaimed a necessity of the laws of History. Or, by invoking Iorga, it was the people's destiny for "their history, archeology, language, ethnography, economic and political conditions, economic development, and national ideology"¹⁰ imposed it.

For example, at the 45th anniversary of the Party, N. Ceaușescu placed the unitary nation-state at the pinnacle of the Romanians' pre-communist historical evolution, thus becoming the springboard for socialist revolution – the only other event of equivalent importance:

[at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century] the issue that deeply concerned the social classes, the popular masses of Romania was the forging of the unitary nation-state – a centuries old goal of the Romanian people, the logical necessity of the development of the Romanian society. [...] The achievement of the unification of the Romanian state – the work of the large masses from the entire country, of our whole people – established the national and social-economic framework for the rapid development of the forces of production. The coming together of the creative energies and abilities of the people set up the conditions for the activity of the progressive forces of society, for the working class movement.¹¹

The 1964 Declaration brought about a shift in history-production. Between 1955 and 1963, the historical front was concerned with demonstrating the historical rights of the Romanians on the territory of the communist state. It did this by developing a synthesis between pre-communist historiographical traditions (often un-named) and the historical materialist method. This initially

Hanga, „Cercetările din RPR privind istoria statului și dreptului din țara noastră (1948-1963) (II)”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, nr.2, anul XVII, 1964, pp. 363-370.

¹⁰ *Apud* Vasile Netea, „N Iorga istoric al unității naționale”, p. 1414.

¹¹ „Expunerea tov. Nicolae Ceaușescu, secretar general al CC al PCR la adunarea festivă cu prilejul aniversării a 45 de ani...”, f. 20.

led to a focus on the Romanians' community of kin (*neam*) defined by origin, language, and culture. Soon, the ideas of economic unity and of the unity of socio-national struggle were added. By mid-sixties, this master-narrative gained another crucial ingredient: the history of a united body-politic. Therefore, from 1965 onwards the task of the historical front will be that of demonstrating the legitimacy, the ancientness, and the superiority of the idea of a Romanian nation-state. This was done under the circumstance of a party-line essentially constructed in contradistinction with domestic (Hungarians or Jews) and international Others (the USSR, Hungary, or the "perverting" West): a perceived competitive environment of overlapping stories of collective identity by/about neighbors, the socialist camp, or the world. This situation had two essential side-effects: the permanence of the "clear and imminent danger" and the inevitability of exceptionalism.

The transition to a central role of political history as a way to genealogically legitimize the socialist nation-state was accelerated and reinforced by the new leadership's directives for integrating party narratives into the larger ones about the national community. One of the tasks of the historical front proclaimed at the Ninth Party Congress was the writing of a history of the RCP. A similar declaration had been made in 1955. Both projects ultimately failed. But what is important in 1965 is that N Ceausecu officially made party history a national one. At the end of October that year, he met with the cadres of the Institute for Party History giving them a series of guidelines about how to proceed with creating this mega-project. Because of space limitations, I will only emphasize the general principles he put forward at this meeting. With this purpose in mind, I selected a fairly large quote from his intervention:

[regarding the writing of the history of the party and of the working-class or socialist movements in Romania] we must focus more, as compared to the past, on the study of all the events that took place throughout the development of our Motherland. That is, the study of the working-class movement, of the history of our party cannot be detached from the totality of these events or, for

that matter, merely superficial, tangential connections to the general development of our society. Such an approach leads to conclusions that are not just [*corespunzătoare*] and it does not offer a real image of the activity of the working-class, of the role of the working-class movement in the evolution of our society. There will result a context that generates conclusions which, at least this is what happened until now, do not correspond to the realities presupposed by the development of the working-class and of our society, of the Romanian state, of our nation. We request that the comrades who will work on the writing of the party history take into account more consistently the true, correct mirroring of the advancement of our entire society, starting with the progress of the forces of production among the social classes and with the latter's role, of the political forces during the period in question and their role. We must not ignore them. We must not, for instance, overlook the fact that we had kings, though they were Germans, and subsequently deal with them as if they never existed in Romania's history.¹²

The proposed inclusiveness of the approach toward the history of the period when socialism, the working-class-movement, and the party appeared and developed did have a precedent. The Centennial of the 1859 unification of the two Romanian principalities functioned upon the same revisionist rationale: how could the party celebrate the formation of the nation-state while ignoring the central historical agents involved in that particular phenomenon? In 1965 the question was how could the party become part of the history of the unified nation-state if it rejected altogether the political and cultural forces/agents that led to the latter fulfillment and subsequent development up until its entrapment in the politics of the Second World War? Unsurprisingly, Ceaușescu, during the same meeting went as far as arguing for the reconsideration of the role of non-communist internal forces in the success of the August 23, 1944, giving the examples of Iuliu Maniu (the head of the National Peasant Party) and Dinu Brătianu (head of the Liberal Party).¹³

The integration of party history into the national one signaled the transition to the encoding of the Nation not only as a people defined by ethnic descent, but also as a body-politic defined by the practice of unity and solidarity manifest in its political manifestations across time.

¹² „Stenograma consfătuirii ținută la CC al PCR în ziua de 27 octombrie 1965 cu cadrele Institutului de Istorie a Partidului în legătură cu întocmirea istoriei PCR” (27 octombrie 1965) în Mioara Anton și Ioan Chiper, *Instaurarea regimului Ceaușescu. Continuitate și ruptură în relațiile româno-sovietice* (București: Institutul Român de Studii Internaționale „Nicolae Titulescu”, 2003), p. 231.

¹³ *Idem*, p. 237.

The empty homogenous time, which Benedict Anderson identified as crucial to the emergence of nationalism, was not employed anymore only at an ethno-cultural level. It now began to be projected ethno-politically. To put it differently, until 1964, the historical front successfully rehabilitated the idea of unity and continuity as axis of historical discourse, with one crucial caveat: the gaping hole of the rehabilitation of the political history of the modern nation-state. But the emphasis on unifying factors (geography, ethnicity, culture, political collaboration, and unified economy) was already entrenched. The affirmation of the socialist Romania's sovereignty filled in the remaining gap of the existing master-narrative: the progressive tradition of the modern State.

National history, with the party included, became the story of the Nation's exercise of its ancestral "vocation of unity." (L. Boia)¹⁴ At the core of it all was a hybrid understanding of organicity. On the one side, there was the organic development presupposed by historical materialism in which ideas, institutions, masses, classes, parties, and personalities have "a relative independence", their impact being the nature of response to the material life of society.¹⁵ Or, in Ceaușescu's words: "if the material life determines men's consciousness, at the same time, the spiritual life plays a crucial role in the advancement of society, in the fulfillment of the great ideals of the people."¹⁶ On the other side, there was the nationalism of late 19th and early 20th

¹⁴ By "vocation of unity," Boia understands "the subordination of the individual in the face of the national organism and, at the same time, a strict delimitation of their own nation in relation to others" in the context of presenting the Romanians "united throughout their whole history, united around the single party and the Leader." See Boia, *History and Myth...*, p. 77.

¹⁵ See the definition of historical materialism in R. Sommer, R. Tomoioagă, P. Vaida (coord.), *Mic dicționar filozofic* (București: Editura Politică, 1969), p. 236. This dictionary was created as an alternative to Ponomarev's Political Dictionary translated into Romania in 1959. In 1965, V. Florea, vicepresident of the State Committee for Culture and Art, considered that Ponomarev's dictionary did not correspond anymore to the necessities of the Romanian state and therefore it should be replaced by another one of domestic production. See „Stenograma ședinței de analiză a activității Editurii Politice din 22 februarie 1965”, f. 27.

¹⁶ „Expunerea tov. Nicolae Ceaușescu, secretar general al CC al PCR la adunarea festivă cu prilejul aniversării a 45 de ani...”, f. 66

century nationalism with its understanding of the nation as a being with a destiny and a mission in history. To use a famous quote by archeologist V Pârvan from his inaugural lectures at “Dacia Superioară” University (between 1919 and 1920):

Open thy wings, you soul of my nation, flap them widely and powerfully in the air of the world below and fly like an eagle to clear and pure horizons. From there your eyes will see ever more clearly the complete icon of the world and of life, but you shall not breathe the stench of the filth of matter brewing below which brings sleep, inertia and death. The serene solitude of the skies will teach you again the Olympian constant rhythm of eternity, untroubled by death, [the rhythm] of the eternal laws that belong to the infinite from which the everlasting light, irradiating to inter-astral spaces, reflects upon our soul ideas, spirit, and life.¹⁷

Pârvan formulated his vision of the Nation in an anti-political register, but upon being mixed with historical determinism and the Millenialism of Marxism-Leninism along with other cultural constructs of pre-1945 traditions, it became a key component in the national essentialism of Romanian Stalinism.¹⁸ By 1965, two eschalogies had met: that of the vanguard people successfully building socialism in one country thus inching closer to communism; and, that of the national being that emerges victorious from the birth-pangs of history. The result was a national Stalinist synthesis, what Robert C. Tucker called a “Sigfried nation”. To paraphrase N. A. Gredeskul, one of the *smenovekhovtsy* intellectuals in the Soviet Union, the RCP and its Leader now led a Revolution which was on a march to the end history that brought to final fruition all the best that was in the past.¹⁹

This hybridization of organicity created a discourse of national deliverance and exceptionalism that played upon so many obsessions of the earlier history-writing. In the context of the integration and accommodation required from the historical front within the system of

¹⁷ „Idei și forme istorice. Patru lecții inaugurale”, in Pârvan, *Scieri...*, p. 389.

¹⁸ B. Trencsenyi identified a similar employment of Parvan’s visions of the Nation within the Romanian nationalist fundamentalism of the 1930s that lay at the core of domestic fascism. See Trencsényi, “‘Imposed Authenticity’”, *Ibidem*, p. 35.

¹⁹ *Apud* in Robert C. Tucker, *Stalin in Power...*, p. 63.

planned science, the overall result was the (re)production of a deep and wide reservoir of discourses of national identity that legitimized the communist regime and which pretty much exhausted the space for alternative stories about the collective self.

B. Organizing Tradition on the Historical Front

1. Historians and their Lingering Pasts – An Overview

Between 1955 and 1963, Romanian historians constantly struggled to find the best ways to officially bringing back the pre-1945 traditions of their epistemic community. Based on the analysis undergone up to this point, one can identify four manners in which the past of Romanian history-writing was recuperated in the scholarly dynamics of the historical front. The first were the biographical articles that re-introduced and re-interpreted the work of a historian. The second was by critical evaluations of certain concepts or topics that implied taking a position in reference with pre-communist historiography. The third was by indirect reference to past approaches – the adoption of some themes without direct mentioning of particular historians. This approach mostly characterized the contributions within the national history treatise. The fourth was by rehabilitation of historians who survived the period of communist terror. Some of them became significant actors in the regime's politics of history (e.g., C. C. Giurescu, Gh. Zane, P. P. Panaitescu); others, because of age or health problems made an impact only on particular topics (e.g., V Papacostea – Balkan Studies, S. Dragomir – history of the Vlachs).

Most importantly though, the defining feature of the historical front was that the majority of its dignitaries had been educated before communism. Individuals such as A. Oțetea, C. Daicoviciu, Em Condurachi, V. Căndea, V. Grecu, I. Nestor, D. Prodan, Al. Elian, etc. already began their careers before communism. All of them had been deeply involved in the

historiographical dynamics of pre-1945 Romania. Even red specialists such as P. Constantinescu-Iași or V. Maciu were quite knowledgeable about the main features of the epistemic community before 1945. This situation had two consequences after 1955: on the one hand, a syncretic approach to the writing of history was inevitable, making the return of the Nation into history-production very likely. These national propensities would only be exacerbated when the historical front became increasingly attached to the RWP politics of sovereignty. Employing existing traditions, historians pretty much became the experts of identity under communism.

At the same time, one could also talk about a certain radicalization of tradition in the sense that national history came back riding two self-determination discourses: internal to the front, against M. Roller and the type of epistemic practice which he came to symbolize ('vulgar sociology', 'falsification', 'de-nationalization'). The second discourse of self-determination was systemic; it was crystallized within the ranks of the party leadership. And, as I mentioned earlier, this allowed for greater accommodation between historians and the party. They basically found out that they shared common interests. Moreover, the various sources of the survival of tradition created the conditions for the reproduction of values from the past by secondary socialization of the new cohorts of historians. The memoirs of historians who developed academically at the end of the fifties and the beginning of the sixties (e.g., Florin Constantiniu or Apostol Stan) reveal the shock and awe of coming into contact with the incumbents of tradition (professors or books). This trajectory, however, applied especially to the history department graduates who entered into the research system, who were exposed to the different, scholarly complex environment of the Academy's institutes. Until 1965, the medium of research was quite rarefied, for it was created on the basis of doubly harsh policies of selection: by the party and by

the doyens of the field themselves. This is the reasons why, in continuation with the pre-1945 situation, the front would become polycentric – each dignitary with his own turf, his own group of protégées, and with his own agenda. Nevertheless, the gradual re-nationalization of history-production tended to minimize the differences. Fundamental methodological debates were pretty much missing (maybe the most important was that of “second-serfdom”), the question was rather how to write back the Nation or how to officialize the recuperation of historians and themes of the past.

There was another source for the official return of tradition besides the gradual thematic shift engineered by a historical front fundamentally socialized in a past that gradually came back on the political realm. It was the re-affirmation of the role of personalities or better said of founding fathers. The latter were perceived as institution and ‘school’ builders. The historical front did not claim anymore to re-invent itself; it appealed to continuity which was set up by identifying the beacons of the field on the basis of whom the thematic agenda could be justified or altered. In his article about N. Iorga in the commemorative special issue of 1965, historian V Netea²⁰ concluded, on the basis of Iorga’s own positive evaluation of his own generation (end of 19th century the beginning of the 20th) that “the nation, overcoming corrupt and servile political games, manifests itself through its chosen spirits, thus imposing its feelings and aspirations.”²¹ I already presented the opinion of the RCP leader about the personalities of Romanian culture who overcame their limitations to bring progress and civilization.

²⁰ Netea had been a member of the National Liberal Party and a witness of the defense at the trial of Iuliu Maniu. For this latter reason he was at one point imprisoned. He will become secretary of the board of *Revue Roumaine d'Histoire*, the main Romanian academic journal for the foreign scholarly market. See Stan, *Politică și istorie*, pp. 160-161.

²¹ Vasile Netea, „N Iorga istoric...”, p. 1417.

The recuperation of pre-1945 historians and historiographical schools, of the Romanian cultural personalities generally speaking, more often than not also meant an exercise in cults of personality, in lavish eulogies of past “teachers”. For example, Iorga was, according to Iorgu Iordan, vice-president of the Academy, a “universal spirit, resembling so many of the illustrious representatives of the Renaissance. N. Iorga must be compared with a natural phenomenon. Unequalled in the history of our national culture, and, I believe, in that of universal culture.”²² Other historians used similar hyperbolic formulae: “Titan of Romanian thought” (S. Ștefănescu) or “Colossus of thought” (P. Simionescu). Most though limited themselves to showing the undeniable transformative role played by Iorga for Romanian historical studies. However, the approach to Iorga (or for that matter Pârvan, Onciul, Xenopol, Bogdan or other historians who were now eulogized) strikingly resembled what Barbara Walker identified as the teacher’s cult. The rehabilitated historians were duly described as creators of “a new intellectual and professional culture under the conditions of emerging [Romanian in our case] modernity.”²³ Historians from both the past and the present were characterized as builders of intellectual and professional institutions that provided their pupils with the means for developing, publicizing and putting their talents to use. They had constructed “strong intellectual and professional network communities that served as significant social foundations for the development of the new institutions”. Moreover, they equipped “their pupils culturally to enter into institutional life and into elite identities through personal membership, often in context to these services.”²⁴

²² „Omagiu lui Nicolae Iorga”, p. 1213.

²³ Barbara Walker, “Iosif Stalin, ‘Our teacher Dear’: Mentorship, Social Transformation, and the Russian Intelligentsia Personality Cult” in Klaus Heller and Jan Plamper (eds.), *Personality Cults in Stalinism – Personenkulte im Stalinismus* (Göttingen: V&R Unipress, 2004), p. 46.

²⁴ *Idem*, pp. 46-47.

What was happening was a continuation, either in practice or in discourse, of the hubris of the Romanian academic elite of the end of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th. The latter had fundamentally functioned on intricate personal networks and fiefdoms based on cliental relations between teachers and mentors.²⁵ Under communism, the situation gained an additional facet: the teachers (who themselves had been pupils before 1945 – e.g., M Berza, E. Condurachi, D. M. Pippidi, I Nestor etc) now became state-based patrons. Institutes, associations, and/or academic journals were built around one or a very tight group of individuals (e.g., the ISSES, the Institute of Archeology in Bucharst, the Institute of History and Archeology in Cluj, etc.). Hagiographic attitudes toward creators of schools or of institutions (past or present) only increased the sense of mission and destiny that was pervasive in politics as well as in science in the context of the visions of national emancipation ubiquitous in the second half of the sixties.

In 1965, Manea Mănescu, the head of the Central Committee's Science and Art Sector pointed out to this proliferation of teacher cults in Romanian scholarly environment. Starting with 1958, the practice of anniversary volumes dedicated to academicians was officialized. Another form of celebration was the publication of special issues of academic journals. Until 1962, five volumes appeared dedicated to I. Iordan, Tr. Săvulescu, C. Daicoviciu, G. Ionescu-

²⁵ Historian L. Nastasă gave the following characterization to the pre-1945 academic environment in Romania: “for the better functioning of a group well defined from a professional point of view with common interests intrinsically formulated, it was necessary that a double network of connections more or less institutionalized be created in order to sustain a series of strategies which could offer to them protection, warrantees, and interpersonal attachments (clients). This is why the main advantage – *endowment (capacitatea)* was always in competition with numerous other elements, of which that of the *family alliances* was not to be ignored.” See Nastasă, *Intelectualii și promovarea...*, p. 32. On the connection between the crisis of Romanian universities, nationalism, and the extreme right-wing after 1918 until the beginning of the 1930s see Irina Livezeanu, *Cultural Politics in Greater Romania: Regionalism, Nation Building, and Ethnic Struggle, 1918-1930* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1995), pp. 211-296.

Sisești, and G Oprescu. Special issues were dedicated to another 10 academicians. However, as the report noted,

in 1965, 11 other anniversary volumes are planned to appear at the Academy's Publishing House, a large number compared to the 5 volumes that came out in the past seven years. Of these, 5 are already on the editorial agenda [one to P. Constantinescu-Iași, another to Al. Rosetti - n.a.], while the inclusion in the plan of other 6 was recently decided upon by the Academy's Presidium. [...] The 11 volumes that will appear this year represent a significant proportion of the Academy's Publishing House activity: [...] 14 percent of the number of editorial pages, 4.6 percent of the paper used, 8.5 percent of all costs, and 40.4 percent of all losses. The anniversary volumes are generally quite voluminous...The special issues celebrating certain academicians have sometimes gone over the regular dimensions. [...] Concerning the editing of anniversary volumes – particularly those from the field of social sciences – the Publishing House encountered a series of difficulties concerning the inadequate content of the materials sent by some specialists from abroad.²⁶

The recuperation of tradition and the celebration of epistemic-bureaucratic consecration under communism was performed in an endemically triumphalist fashion. And, following Barbara Walker's conclusions, this "teacher cult", both as practice of understanding the past and of organizing the present, provided a fertile ground for an upping of the cult of personality. One should not forget that both Nicolae and Elena Ceaușescu will go on to acquire all the trappings of epistemic confirmation as indicators of their legitimacy at the top of the decision-making pyramid. The "teacher cult" also left little space of critical re-evaluations of the methodologies or schools that were rehabilitated. The practice of "comrade-scientist", that is, "heroic figures combining both ideological vigor and scientific expertise,"²⁷ was projected into the past. As we shall see in Iorga's case, there was critical evaluation but on matters related to the absence of a historical materialist method. On issues concerning the role of the Nation in history there hardly was any reservation. On the contrary, the tendency was to augment Iorga's ideas. Historian L. Boia correctly remarked that the historical discourse under Ceaușescu was based upon "the

²⁶Manea Mănescu, „Notă cu privire la volumele omagiale editate cu prilejul aniversării unor academicieni”, 27 aprilie, ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, no.7/1965, ff. 96-97.

²⁷ Pollock, *Stalin...*, p. 8.

adoption and amplification of a nineteenth century national mythology.”²⁸ In conclusion, more often than not, tradition turned into a pretext for reloading field localized orthodoxies.

One last element must be taken into consideration when trying to understand the context and manner in which tradition was recuperated, ordered, and invoked. The historians (and cultural personalities) who were rehabilitated would often be described as true Romanian intellectuals who represented not only epistemic excellence but also the real spirit of the people. Going back to my paradigmatic example, that of Iorga, the scientific secretary of the party history institute, Titu Georgescu, presented him as “a historian who always sought for, sometimes successfully, other times not, the path to his people’s soul...which he wanted elevated to the level deserved on the basis of its historical past.”²⁹ The manner of presenting these figures of the past resembled A. Gramsci’s definition of what he called “organic intellectuals”: “Every social group, coming into existence on the original terrain of an essential function in the world of economic production, creates together with itself, organically, on or more strata of intellectuals which give it homogeneity and an awareness of its own function not only in the economic, but also in the social and political fields.” Zenovia Sochor compared the category of organic intellectual to Aleksander Bogdanov’s definition of “workers’ intelligentsia” - “independent ideologues from within the proletariat itself.” The latter were to be the agents of cultural revolution.³⁰ But the idea of *intelligents* that are actors of the transformation of the group they originate from and represent can be generally applied. In the context of the invocation national rebirth, the eminent representatives of past Romanian culture became agents of a national

²⁸ Boia, *History and Myth*..., p. 82.

²⁹ Titu Georgescu, „Nicolae Iorga împotriva hitlerismului”, *Ibidem*, pp. 1428.

³⁰ *Apud* Sochor, *Revolution and Culture*, p. 37. For a more detailed discussion about organic intellectuals see Anne Showstack Sassoon, *Gramsci’s Politics* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), pp. 134-146.

revolution on the cultural realm both in the past and in the present. Their fundamental significance lay in the fact that they incarnated the true feelings and ideal of the Nation – they were both apostles and proofs of its organicity.

2. Contested Taxonomies of Tradition

When St Pascu and E. Stănescu published, in 1964, the plan for a volume about “The Modern Historiography of Romania”³¹, the specificities of the roles and functions of tradition within the historical field manifested themselves in full tilt. Two preliminary observations need to be made: first, everybody who participated at the debate knew what the authors were talking about, in spite of the fact that some of the names of the historians discussed appeared for the first time in *Studii* and most of the books mentioned, particularly those since the second half of the 19th century were hardly available even in libraries (the Academy’s library was the crucial exception). Second, the plan endorsed by the DPC would take strong fire from the epistemic community. Unsurprisingly, volume VIII on history of historiography will fall through just like all the other remaining sections of the treatise *Istoria României*. Until 1978, when the *Encyclopedia of Romanian Historiography* will be published, the front preferred to produce biographic works on various historians, to publish the latter’s selected works, or individual historians wrote syntheses about the history of domestic historiography.

Pascu and Stănescu proposed three periods of what they call modern Romanian history-writing: I. modern historiography during the period of the crisis of feudalism and the coming of

³¹ Ștefan Pascu și Eugen Stănescu, „Istoriografia modernă a României. Încercare de periodizare și fixare a principalelor curente și tendințe”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, nr.1, anul XVII, 1964, pp. 133-158. A legitimate question here would be why these two authors? Pascu was C. Daicoviciu’s closest collaborator, later becoming his heir in Cluj. So he most probably acted as legatee of the president of the Academy’s Historical Section. E. Stănescu was the editor in chief of *Studii*, which, even more than the Academy, was under DPC control. At the same time, both historians had been previously involved in important party-coordinated projects, so they had the experience of navigating the troubled waters of fixing interpretation in continuation of the party line.

capitalism; II. modern historiography during the development of capitalism; III. modern historiography at the beginning of imperialism. It is obvious that the authors founded their periodization on the premise of an overlap between the evolution of modes of production and the development of the writing of history. This primary principle of the plan was called into question. For example, N. Copoiu³², criticized what he considered the erroneous “delimitation of historiography on the basis of the fact that a historian belonged biologically to a certain epoch.”³³ He went on to suggest “there should be more emphasis on the correspondence between the content of Romanian historiography and the superstructures of those particular periods.”³⁴ Copoiu concluded that “it is therefore an exaggeration on the side of the authors that they tried to rigidly place historians within the timeframe of one social-economic formation or another, which themselves have been circumscribed quite conventionally.”³⁵

In a less dogmatic fashion, P. P. Panaitescu made a similar proposal: “if the presentation of Romanian historiography would take into account the great currents that can be noticed in the development of the entire culture, it will then be able to integrate history into this evolution.” He then offered an alternative taxonomy that hardly had anything to do with the historical materialism, being more the expression of pre-1945 taxonomies, though left-leaning, of national culture: Romanian humanism, the Transylvanian School (Enlightenment), bourgeois democracy (1848 generation), *Junimism* (the cultural current headed by Titu Maiorescu), *Semănătorism* and

³² Nicolae Copoiu had taken his PhD from Leningrad University (1957). In 1965, he became head of sector at the Institute for historical, social, and political studies of the RCP's Central Committee. By 1971, he will be nominated its scientific secretary. Under Ceășescu, he will be a pillar of the historical front.

³³ See N. Copoiu's intervention in „Istoriografia modernă a României. Tematică”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, nr.2, anul XVIII, 1965, p. 433.

³⁴ *Idem*, p. 432. S. Columbeanu formulated the same criticism in his intervention See „Istoriografia modernă a României. Tematică” *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, nr.2, anul XVII, 1964, p. 272.

³⁵ *Idem*, p. 433.

the peasant centered ideology (here Iorga was a central figure); and socialism.³⁶ The fundamental idea behind Copoiu's and Panaitescu's criticisms was formulated by philosopher N. Gogoneață, who argued that "we need a more nuanced characterization of the work and thought of our historians from the modern era in order to give up on inflexible structures."³⁷ This was a central theme of the rehabilitation wave of the mid-sixties. It can be encountered on other fields of well, for instance, the history of Romanian philosophy. S. Mureșeanu complained in his review of the first monograph about the history of social and philosophical thought in Romania that "it seems that the insertion of some personalities under a title or another of the identified groups compelled the authors to be exclusively concerned with proving the given qualification. In reality, we can observe in the works of philosophers, aestheticians, men of culture multiple aspects of highly contradictory nature."³⁸ These debates officialized the fundamental mechanism of the rehabilitation of tradition: the contextualized analysis that left plenty of space for continuous reconsideration in accordance to the expansion of accepted epistemic discourses within a particular area of scholarship under communism.

To return to framework proposed by Pascu and Stănescu, they defined the first of the three periods as the historiography of the Enlightenment dividing it into another three sections: 1. late feudal Enlightenment; 2. early bourgeois Enlightenment; and, 3. Pre-Romantic bourgeois Enlightenment. The main characteristics of this first phase were:

³⁶ See P. Panaitescu's intervention in „Istoriografia modernă a României. Tematică” *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, nr.5, anul XVII, 1964, p. 1157.

³⁷ See N. Gogoneață's intervention in „Istoriografia modernă a României. Tematică” *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, nr.3, anul XVII, 1964, p. 618

³⁸ See S. Mureșeanu recenzie la *Istoria gândirii sociale și filozofice în România*, București, Edit. Acad. RPR, 1964, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, nr.1, anul XVIII, 1965, p. 201. Interestingly, among those criticized in this review is N. Gogoneață, who seemed to have internalized the practice which he was imputed to have ignored. These discussions helped academia figure out which were the accepted forms of public knowledge. The immediate consequence was that those who had failed to notice them initially would then adopt this additional facet resulted from the flux of accommodation.

the importance of reason in the act of knowing, of mastering science, of the enlightenment from feudal ideology in historiography (...a beginning in the critical use of sources, the strengthening of secular beliefs in the explanation of historical phenomena, the affirmation of the history of human ideas, feeling, and actions against theology). The struggle for the social-political program of the bourgeois; the beginning of a bourgeois philosophy in history.³⁹

Enlightenment became national-social awakening in the second section of this first stage, because it was identified with the Transylvanian school: “the militant character of historical writing and of practical activities (serving the people, the critique of feudal institutions, the selections and employment of sources and archives)...Using history writing in the Romanians struggle for political and national emancipation.”⁴⁰ The third section does not jump out as the previous one, but it seems to exist in order to confirm the idea of continuous progress.

The analysis of the first stage of ‘modern historiography’ was heavily criticized. For example, S. Columbeanu proposed giving up on the term “Enlightenment” altogether, while also noting that the Romanian bourgeoisie until the beginning of the 19th century was not a fully form class, so it couldn’t have an program, an ideology.⁴¹ Historian Vlad Georgescu (who would later emigrate in the US and become director of the Romanian section of Radio Free Europe) refused to accept that one can speak of Enlightenment outside of Transylvania and duly proposed a new taxonomy: “traditional historiography which will also include the last chronicle-type of writings; historical Enlightenment, chapter that will focus exclusively on the Transylvanian School; pre-Romanticism, which will analyze the production of intellectual strata in the Principalities.”⁴² The problem with these two criticisms was that they could hardly stick because they ran counter with existing party interpretations: first, the idea of a program of the bourgeoisie at the beginning

³⁹ Pascu and Stănescu, *Ibidem*, p. 134.

⁴⁰ *Idem*, p. 135.

⁴¹ S. Columbeanu, *Ibidem*, p. 371.

⁴² See Vlad Georgescu’s intervention in „Istoriografia modernă a României. Tematică”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, nr.2, anul XVIII, 1965, pp. 435-436.

of the 19th century would increasingly become fundamental for the elevation of the 1821 rebellion to the status of revolution; second, to claim a non-unitary character to an intellectual phenomenon, especially of the caliber of Enlightenment, denied the very rationale of history-production in Romania since early sixties. But the two interventions, as well as the entire debate I am analyzing, were important for they showed the potential for alternative interpretations to dominant narratives.

The second stage of the plan was identified with Romantic historiography. It was perceived as a synthesis between progressive ideas and retrograde ones. Subsequently, a set of features was assigned for each tendency: progressive – dialectical elements in historical thought, history as movement, love for the people and the focus on the masses, the critique of feudalism, the struggle for replacing the old, the birth of class struggle, militant patriotism, republicanism versus monarchism; retrograde – the appeal to providentialism in explaining historical phenomena, the idealization of historical past, the often poorly documented writings, a metaphysical understanding of the concept of “the people”.⁴³ This stage has its own sections: first, democratic-revolutionary Romantism, where the usual suspects are listed – N Bălcescu, M Kogălniceanu, Al. Papiu-Ilarian, along with German scholar Ștefan L. Roth. Second, democratic and bourgeois-liberal Romantism, which seemed to function as a catch-all category in which individuals that could be presented as progressive, though not revolutionary, would be included. This explains why among them we find a wide array of personalities: G Barițiu, A. T. Laurian, S. Bărnuțiu, T. Cipariu, Ion Heliade Rădulescu, Cezar Bolliac, Dimitrie Bolintineanu, Ion Ghica, B. P. Hașdeu, E. Hurmuzaki, Al. Odobescu, N Desușianu, Vasile Alexandrescu-Urechia, Grigore Tocilescu, etc. These individuals were the pioneers of historical studies in modern Romania, but

⁴³ Pascu și Stănescu, *Ibidem*, p. 138.

they were also highly visible figures in the first incarnation of the Romanian modern state. Their recuperation *en masse*, though not without reservations, meant that the second half of the 19th century had already become work in progress for the politics of culture under communism. In fact, this phenomenon had been anticipated by articles published between 1957 and 1963 and by the debates surrounding the fourth volume of the national history treatise. The third section of the second stage was called conservative Romanticism, mostly clerical historiography.

The first problem with this second taxonomy was that it did not follow the categories proposed for the period in question from the chapter on national culture of the mid- to late 19th century in the fourth volume of the national history treatise. This phenomenon did not manifest only on the realm of history-writing. S. Mureșeanu, in his analysis of the monograph about Romanian social and philosophical thought, complained that there were no unitary criteria for the classification of the same period.⁴⁴ Historians too pointed out to this problem. For instance, Dan Berindei requested an extension of the taxonomy from the treatise for better understanding the complexities of history-writing during this specific period.⁴⁵

Two other issues were raised by the commentators of the proposed structure for the second stage of Romanian historiography. Some of them took offense in the label of “Romanticism” for the latter was identified with the lack of structure and method. It was perceived as a knock on individuals that already had a long tenure in the communist Pantheon – N. Bălcescu, M Kogălniceanu, S. Bărnăușiu, A. T. Laurian and others. The second matter was a corollary of this criticism. Pascu and Stănescu ‘dared’ to claim that Romantic historiography had embellished the national past. This was labeled as misguided analysis. According to D. Berindei,

⁴⁴ See Mureșan, *Ibidem*, p. 198.

⁴⁵ See Dan Berindei’s intervention in „Istoriografia modernă a României. Tematică” *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, nr.3, anul XVII, 1964, p.611.

the subjects dealt with by these [Romantic] historians were alive, they were related to the struggle for innovation and reform. It was far from them the idea to write history for history's sake. In their view, history was a weapon, and one of the sharpest ones, in the struggle against *l'ancien regime*. They were combatants for progress. [...] The return to the past in progressive, Romanian, romantic historiography is a return to a *certain* past – sometimes real, sometimes fabricated – in order to serve the struggle for progress. Its purpose is to demonstrate the necessity of renouncing an inadequate present, to give way to the new.⁴⁶

S. Columbeanu argued along similar lines: “the past, besides a way of life and institutions, also contains the struggle for national and social liberation [...] The invocation and even the idealization of the past for the purpose of national and social liberation had a positive character, corresponding to immediate social and political necessities of the period from 1840 to 1880.”⁴⁷ A “red” philosopher, R. Pantazi, drove the point home stating that “this nationalism belongs, as Lenin has shown, to the nationalism of oppressed nations and it has a democratic, progressive nature.”⁴⁸

To summarize, Romanian historians openly defended the legitimacy of inventing tradition upon which a supposedly democratic discourse of the Nation could be based. Moreover, nationalism was legitimate because of the hardships of Romanian history. Considering similar forms of this argument that I described earlier, it becomes obvious that, between 1964 and 1965, the idea of a correct nationalism and the belief on the necessity of national myths had generalized within the historical front. In envisaging history as planned science at the service of the Nation, such historiographical algorithm was projected upon and recuperated from tradition. The same type of rationale was used in order to justify nationalism in Poland in 1966. According to historian J. Kowalski, “in our country, the modern nation was not formed under circumstances of state independence, but in the context of national oppression. Because of this reality, the general

⁴⁶ See Berindei, *Ibidem*, p. 612.

⁴⁷ See Columbeanu, *Ibidem*, p. 371.

⁴⁸ See R. Pantazi's intervention in „Istoriografia modernă a României. Tematică”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, nr.1, anul XVIII, 1965, p. 178.

struggle against national oppressors came first, especially when national repression intensified.”⁴⁹ Wladislaw Gora continued his colleague’s ideas declaring that it was wrong to consider “every manifestation of national aspirations, the tendency to decide independently one’s own fate...as a manifestation of nationalism.”⁵⁰ Polish historians made the distinction between “great nation chauvinism” and emancipatory nationalism. Romanians talked about the nationalism of the oppressed and that of the oppressors. Both aimed at the same thing: to configure by Marxist-Leninist analysis and through re-interpretation of tradition a theoretical genealogy for the legitimacy of their respective regime’s and epistemically grounded narratives of the Nation.

The most heated debates were caused by the presentation of the third stage of Romanian historiography. Pascu and Stănescu labeled it as “positivistic history”. The taxonomy for it was as follows: first, liberal positivism that itself was split into 1) historical sociologism (the most important representatives were A. D. Xenopol and Radu Rosetti), 2) historical criticism (Ioan Bogda, D. Onciul, N Iorga, V Pârvan), 3) historical descriptivism (defined by the method of simply creating successions of events, therefore suffering from ‘factology’). The second big current in this stage was “conservative positivism” represented by Gh Panu, C. Giurescu, J. Peretz, I. C. Fillitti. The period of modern historiography at the beginning of imperialism ended with the beginnings of the Marxist writing of history.

The essential idea behind characterizing each of these currents and tendencies within Romanian modern historiography was to emphasize the authors’ national value and the contradictions of their work, which in itself allowed for further re-interpretation. In the following

⁴⁹ „Problema evoluției gândirii marxiste în problema națiunii și statului în discuția istoricilor polonezi”..., f. 12.

⁵⁰ *Idem*, f. 17.

I will deal only with the current of “liberal positivism” because within it are included the founding fathers of Romanian historiography. This current was characterized by

exceptional erudition and knowledge of the sources...relative resistance to the influences of the landowner-bourgeois regime in interpreting documents, the predominance of democratic ideas as compared to reactionary one; a global, multilateral vision of historical past, but avoidance of historical analysis of the contemporary period...The predominance of ideas in understanding historical causality, with sometimes persistent interest in describing the material conditions of human life; ...the dominant focus on great personalities, but this did not exclude a critical spirit in analyzing the activity of the ruling classes and certain sympathy toward the people; the simultaneously cosmopolite and nationalist nature of their interpretation of historical phenomena; the value and the limits of the historical conception with a view to correctly placing national history in the universal one.⁵¹

Its first tendency, “historical sociology” was defined by

the differentiation between the concept of historical process and that of historical event...the insertion of a vague notion of ‘institutions’ (both as actual institutions of state organization and as social relations, branches of production, etc.); the acceptance of a society split into classes, of social exploitation, of class struggle; the latter though was denied its definitive character in the historical process;...the overestimation of the external factor; the exaggeration of the role of superstructures; ... periodization often on the basis of idealist criteria; generally speaking an obvious modernization of historiography as the latter was brought to a par with the European one.⁵²

The second tendency, “historical criticism” was depicted as follows:

Common trait: the progress in the scientific publication of sources and in their use on the basis of scientific critique. Idealist-positivist limits in the critique of sources. Features for a part of historical criticism: ... the publication of documents as a purpose in itself...and, on the other hand, the tendency toward comprehensive syntheses. The accentuation within historical criticism of the characteristic contradictions, from the point of view of method and conceptualization, of bourgeois positivist historiography.⁵³

These rather dry general overviews became more ‘personal’ and laudatory when the authors dealt with individual historians. For example, Xenopol had “carefully and with great empathy followed social problems, especially those of the peasantry in the Middle Ages.” His historical and philological arguments against immigrationist theories were singled out, as well as “his contribution to a better understanding of the Romanians’ struggle for independence, of the process of the formation of a national culture and consciousness; his militancy through

⁵¹ Pascu și Stănescu, *Ibidem*, p. 150

⁵² *Idem*.

⁵³ *Idem*, p. 152.

historiography for the completion of national unity...; a sound philosophical research of the foundations of history...; laws and causality in history; the evolution and the role of personality; history as science.”⁵⁴ Or, among the features of Iorga’s work, the following were also listed:

the interpretation of a people’s history as an organic whole with multiple, interconnected levels and from this the research of groups of central issues based upon one objective feature or, more often, on an idea. The heroes were deciding factors of history, especially during watersheds; the underestimation of the political role, in the sense of action and initiative, of the popular masses, which cultural creation was though acknowledged and underscored....The often correct understanding of the internal factor, while exaggerating external influences...the recognition of interdependence of peoples from a certain geographical and historical region, but, at the same time, his vision of predominantly antagonist relations manifested through ceaseless struggle⁵⁵

For both these historians, and for many others listed in the draft for the eighth volume of the national history treatise, there were plenty of negative features assigned to their work, most of them resonating with the characterizations one can find in the treatise’s earlier, published volumes. What stood out, and this was the purpose of my two examples, was the manifest attempt to balance the criticism incurred by tradition under the impact of historical materialism with the recuperation from the past of individuals, works, and methods that had a role in better understanding national history. By putting into discussion these nuanced balance sheets of past historiography, *Studii* (and the regime) allowed members of the historical front to express their *personal* opinions on how should tradition be interpreted. Considering that only very few of those who intervened actually held important bureaucratic positions in the system of planned science, the debate on tradition looked more like a mobilization campaign or a census on the change in the party’s politics of history.

The first important issue raised in various interventions was that of the feasibility of the term “imperialism” for the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century. Its use by Pascu and Stănescu reflected earlier approaches on the period that were related to the interpretation of the

⁵⁴ *Idem*, pp. 150-151.

⁵⁵ *Idem*, pp. 153-154.

First World War. By 1964-1965, though, the party leadership began to reject this interpretative framework. As Romania's participation at the war and the political importance of the unification with Transylvania were re-assessed, the term imperialism was increasingly rejected. This tendency can be noticed in the discussions on Romanian historiography as well. Related to this issue was the insistence of most commentators in this debate that the first decade of the 20th century was not a legitimate threshold for the analysis of history-writing. There were two crucial arguments: the first was that some of the authors listed in the taxonomy had written important works after this turning point and that latter's non-inclusion was arbitrary, crippling the analysis of the subject.

The second one was that in imposing this time limit historians of fundamental importance were ignored. And here appeared maybe the most important departure from pre-1964 analysis: names such as I. Lupaş, I. Nistor, Al. Lapedatu, St. Meteş, St. Zeletin, I Ursu, Ilie Minea, D. Russo, Alexandru Tzigara-Samurcaş, Ilie Andrieşescu, even Gh. I Brătianu were invoked.⁵⁶ In other words, the most relevant historians of the first half of the 20th century in Romania; most of them had been *les bêtes noires* of Marxist historiography; some of them, as shown earlier, were imprisoned and died in jail during the first decade of the regime. But, in 1964, I. Lupaş, St. Meteş, I. Hudiţă, or S. Dragomir were more or less present both in the institutional and personal networks of the historical front. Moreover, the generation that was formed under their mentorship controlled now important levers of academic power. In conclusion, the discussions about the plan for the volume of history of historiography not only revealed the wide horizon of

⁵⁶For example see Dan Simionescu's intervention in „Istoriografia modernă a României. Tematică” *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, nr.3, anul XVII, 1964, p. 619, Vasile Netea's in „Istoriografia modernă a României. Tematică” *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, nr.5, anul XVII, 1964, p. 1150, or Paul Cernovodeanu's in „Istoriografia modernă a României. Tematică”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, nr.2, anul XVIII, 1965, pp. 431.

rehabilitation for 19th century culture (i.e., history writing), but it also set the groundwork for further recuperations of 20th century cultural personalities.

The rejection by their peers of Pascu and Stănescu's decision to stop at the beginning of the 20th century and subsequently to ignore later scholarship had wider consequences.⁵⁷ Their very method approaching the discussed topic was put into question. The alternatives proposed varied from more conformist ones to outright calls for the employment of pre-1945 taxonomies. At one side of the spectrum was C. Șerban who envisaged the following structure: I. pre-Marxist period: 1. medieval historiography, 2. modern, 3 contemporary; II. Marxist period: 1. the beginning of Marxist historiography, 2. Marxist historiography under the landowner-bourgeois regime; 3. Marxist historiography after the liberation from the fascist yoke.⁵⁸ Of course, the main problem with this plan was that it did not integrate Marxist historiography in general national developments. At the other side was C-tin Angelescu who proposed that the historical front came to terms that its project was not new and that it should rely on earlier, clearer, attempts. Angelescu contended that there could be a synthesis between Ioan Bogdan's acceptance speech at the Academy (the text was published in 1906 and it was entitled *Romanian Historiography and its Present Problems*) and C. C. Giurescu's opening lecture for the chair of Romanian history, which was published in 1926 as *Considerations on Romanian Historiography in the last 20 years*.⁵⁹ Angelescu's proposal was not as wild as it looks at first glance: on the one hand Bogdan was already a founding father (his Centennial was celebrated in 1964) and C. C. Giurescu was well on his way to be fully integrated in the historical front. Moreover, N Iorga had

⁵⁷ See Copoiu, *Ibidem*, p. 433 or see Angelescu's intervention in „Istoriografia modernă a României. Tematică”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, nr.4, anul XVIII, 1965, pp. 924

⁵⁸ See C. Șerban's intervention in „Istoriografia modernă a României. Tematică” *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, nr.2, anul XVII, 1964, pp. 374.

⁵⁹ See Angelescu, *Ibidem*, p. 925.

been involved in the drafting of both of the texts he mentioned. Angelescu's intervention was bold, but within the regular dynamics of history-production in mid-sixties.

At the same time, other historians rejected the monographic approach of each and every historian from the past. P. P. Panaitescu explained that "instead of listing persons and their works, it would be more scientific that the authors would show, for each current discussed, which were the great problems that Romanian society was faced with and what were the solutions advanced by the historians. In other words, the exposition of proposed solutions would be not according to persons but according to issues." He then went on to list the most important subject that Romanian historiography was confronted with regardless of current:

The problem of the Romanian people's unity of origin, that of the Romanians' continuity in Dacia, their state independence, the struggle of our people against the Turks as a fight that interests the general history of European civilization, social problems: the formation of peasant collectives, the formation of feudalism by turning the peasants into serfs, the origins of the boyars' dominions and the struggle against the leftovers of feudalism, the formation of cities and the rise of the urban classes, the domestic origins of capitalism, the development of Romanian culture, the role of Slavism, and, most of all, class struggle, the beginnings of the working-class movement.⁶⁰

Panaitescu's list of central topics of Romanian historiography was strikingly similar to the research agenda established by the collective of authors of the national history treatise (of which we was member). He was rather uneasy about structuring the history of historiography according to time periods demarcated by threshold years, which in themselves represented significant historical events in the progression toward the nation-state (1821, 1848, 1859, 1877/8, 1907, or 1918). He correctly realized that this arrangement made the return to writing predominantly political history, and implicitly judging historiography from its vantage point, close to inevitable.

⁶⁰ Panaitescu, *Ibidem*, p. 1156.

V. Netea, Valentin Georgescu, Gh Buzatu, or D. Ciurea⁶¹ made similar criticisms of the project. The subjects they signaled out were not considerable different from the list provided by Panaitescu. A preliminary observation would be that the problem of the Romanian (nation-)state tradition had yet to be fully internalized in 1964-1965 by the representatives of the historical front. This subject does not figure yet among the lists of topics considered central for the epistemic tradition; the situation will soon change. A possible hint of things to come was Gh Buzatu⁶²'s new periodization of Romanian historiography in four periods: since the dissolution of feudalism to the coming of capitalism; between 1848 and 1878; from 1878 to 1900; and from 1901 to 1918. These periods corresponded to the creation and evolution of the Romanian modern nation-state (with the evolution of the social-democratic movement inserted along the way).

Another attack against the plan proposed by Pascu and Stănescu was caused by their general remark that positivism was not interested in the writing of contemporary history. Among others, S. Columbeanu, Tr. Lungu, and N. Copoiu provided counter-examples. These interventions were important from two points of view: first, at a more particular level, they offered the possibility for more nuanced approaches to some personalities such as Titu Maiorescu or Gh Panu, who before had been simply categorized as reactionary conservatives. Tr. Lungu dwelled extensively on the merits of Titu Maiorescu, whom he and other indicated as an unacceptable absence. Maiorescu's *Contemporary History of Romania* was praised by Lungu as "one of the most complete sources of information about the political life, about the tribulations

⁶¹ See Netea, *Ibidem*, p. 1151, Valentin Georgescu's intervention in „Istoriografia modernă a României. Tematică” *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, nr.5, anul XVII, 1964, p. 1148, Gh. Buzatu's and D. Ciurea's interventions in „Istoriografia modernă a României. Tematică”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, nr.3, anul XVIII, 1965, p. 688 and p. 691.

⁶² Buzatu did not gain significant bureaucratic positions under communism, but he will make a name for himself after 1989, when he perpetuated the myths of the Ceaușescu period and, even more significantly, he became one of the most important negationists of the Holocaust in Romania.

that defined Romania between 1866 and 1900.”⁶³ Maiorescu, along with *Junimea*, was praised for his objectivity and for the insistence on organic analysis of general and contemporary history. The significance of Lungu’s intervention should not be underestimated. He once was the secretary of the party organization at the Academy’s Institute of History in Bucharest, a historian with close ties with the DPC (in late fifties he appears among the lecturers of the sector for Science and Culture). At the same time, Lungu’s intervention was only one among many in mid-sixties that brought about a full rehabilitation of Maiorescu as a significant cultural personality.⁶⁴ Maiorescu’s theory of “forms without content” was used by the party ideologues in order to emphasize the imperative of originality, of controlled borrowing from abroad, and ultimately of autochthonous-ness. It was not such an abusive usage of *Junimea*’s organicist liberal conservatism, for, as one author duly noticed, this intellectual trend “contained the beginnings of a new type of antiliberal nationalism.”⁶⁵

The second standpoint in interpreting the importance of the interventions revisiting the ability of ‘positivist’ historians to write contemporary history lied in the fact that in pointing it out, the participants at the debate also legitimized the readings of these histories. This will allow for future invocation of the authority of tradition in the analysis of crucial events in Romanian modern history. As N. Copoiu argued: “the mind of the historian, contemporary with the events that he describes, accumulates so many facts and ideas that his intelligence fairly easily

⁶³ See Tr. Lungu’s intervention in „Istoriografia modernă a României. Tematică” *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, nr.2, anul XVII, 1964, pp. 373.

⁶⁴ For example, S. Mureșeanu criticized the authors of the monograph on Romanian social and philosophical thought for “capitalizing enough on recent substantive interventions that led to a nuanced understanding of Maiorescu’s contradictory personality. From this point of view, it is unjustifiable the fact that *Junimism* was treated unilaterally, only as a political ideology.” See S. Mureșeanu recenzie la *Istoria gândirii sociale și filozofice în România*, București, Edit. Acad. RPR, 1964, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, nr.1, anul XVIII, 1965, pp. 199.

⁶⁵ Trencsényi, “‘Imposed Authenticity’”, *Ibidem*, p. 29.

constructs correct evaluations, resistant to later research based on archival documents.”⁶⁶ To put it more simply, in praising and establishing the validity of interpretations by people such as Maiorescu, Iorga, Xenopol, etc of events they lived through, than their observations could be presented by historians under communism dealing with the same events as authoritative, final judgments. The incumbents of tradition usually gained close to sacred positions in the fields claiming them. The invocation of their views about their own times only reinforced the orthodoxies of Romanian historiography under the communist regime.

Despite the many complaints and criticisms, the participants at the debate did not miss the two fundamental meanings of the project proposed by Pascu and Stănescu. On the one hand, it was “the first time when history of historiography was analyzed in a unitary fashion on the entire Romanian territory.”⁶⁷ In other words, this initiative recuperated modern writing of history as a national, unified scientific and cultural phenomenon with direct and capital bearing on the present fate of the historical front. On the other hand, Pascu and Stănescu’s proposal “opened a new field of research and investigation for our historians” - the systematic study of “the often rich heritage of past historiography.”⁶⁸ Overall, this initiative and the incurring debate signified the officialization of continuity with pre-1945 historiography. It publicly told to the epistemic community that it had a past from which to learn and be proud of. Between 1964 and 1965, not only did the historical front get back its founding fathers and their heritage, but it also re-enforced the status of the science it represented.

⁶⁶ Copoiu, *Ibidem*, p. 434.

⁶⁷ See Valentin Georgescu, *Ibidem*, p. 1147

⁶⁸ See Columbeanu, *Ibidem*, p. 371.

C. Kin, Nation, and Unity in History

1. Identity and Consciousness before the Nation

In March 1966, at a debate organized by the journal of the Polish institute for Party History, historian J. Kowalski found an excellent formulation for a cardinal theme of history-writing under communist regimes grappling with the dilemmas of building stories of identity bound to a national context. According to Kowalski, “the state, social, and cultural life integrate the unitary character of the nation founded on a community of tradition and interests. The latter is the bedrock of the former. This represents a law that, despite fundamental social transformation, defined the nation during capitalism as well as the nation in socialism.”⁶⁹ His Romanian counterparts were listening; a detailed report of the Polish discussion existed in the *Buletin Informativ* produced, for internal use only, by the Institute of Party History for the DPC. The Romanians were interested to learn from their brotherly party. At the same time, they could empathize, for the historical front in Romania had reached the same point: it was now talking about a unified Nation across history, organically developed out of traditions, ethnic communion, cultural, economic, geographical, and political unity. And, the existence of such entity resisted historical materialism, or better put, the latter had created an interpretative context that made the former a necessity of the laws of history.

Both the Poles and the Romanians had been trying since the end of the fifties to fix their peoples’ place in history and to establish a genealogical narrative that could sustain the polity of the present. In Romania, the fundamental effect was that history-production became mainly (and will remain so until 1989) an endeavor that gathered innumerable proofs of a unitary existence of the people and of the necessary consciousness, to paraphrase Eugen Stănescu. The editor in chief

⁶⁹ „Problema evoluției gândirii marxiste în problema națiunii și statului în discuția istoricilor polonezi”, f. 7.

of *Studii* published in the second-last issue of the journal a programmatic article “On the Medieval Premises of Romanian National Consciousness”. His endeavor was an attempt to clarify a concept that lay at the foundation of post-1956 historiography – *neam* (kin). What had been affirmed in rather diffuse manner throughout the first three volumes of the national history treatise was now asserted in a synthetic fashion on the flagship scholarly review of the historical front. Moreover, in his exegesis on the meaning behind the pair “român-românesc” established a theoretical determination that allowed for a continuity of historical thought on the Nation from the 14th to the 20th century. Stănescu’s article must therefore be read from the point of view of the flurry of materials produced by both the party and the epistemic community in order to create a comprehensive framework of understanding national identity. It excellently anticipated the special issue dedicated to N Iorga’s work in which the cardinal ideas discussed were those of the Romanians’ unity, organicity, and originality.

Stănescu’s starting point was that “there are words which encompass a whole historical universe of states of mind and consciousness which can be analyzed at different stages in their historical evolution.”⁷⁰ In his opinion, words such as “român-românesc” (Romanian, as noun, and Romanian, as adjective) concealed the core of the mind and soul of a people. Therefore, in following their evolution in the three Romanian states he believed to be able to point to the constitutive element of national consciousness. The first significant novelty of Stănescu’s article, as compared to his contemporaries, was his definition of *neam*: “an objective historical reality designating human groups characterized by an ethnic and language community.” The consciousness of kin (*neam*) was the feeling of belonging to such group.⁷¹ In this context, the

⁷⁰ Eugen Stănescu, „Premisele medievale ale conștiinței naționale românești. Român-românesc în textele românești din veacurile XV-XVII”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, nr.5, anul XVII, 1964, pp. 967

⁷¹ *Idem*, p. 968.

pair “romîn-romînesc” described an ethnic objective reality in history on three layers: “ethnic general” – as a nomination of one’s belonging to the Romanian people in counter distinction from another person of different kin; “ethnic particular, as the name of the feudal state between the Carpathians and the Danube [Wallachia – Țara Românească] which inhabitants were Romanians in the ethnic sense, but also part of the entire people with an obvious juridical and political meaning”; and, as social class – *rumîn* – the serf.⁷² Stănescu’s main thesis was that in following the evolution of the employment of the three meanings of the pair “romîn-romînesc” from 15th to 17th century he would be able to identify the medieval premises of national consciousness.

He built his argument around the idea of a unified and steady progress of Romanian language along with the people’s struggle of emancipation as “Romanian kin”. Subsequently, “romîn-romînesc”, in relation to ethnic unity, designated “a state of mind and a set of ideas belonging to the entire Romanian society that quantitatively increased from the 15th to the 17th century.”⁷³ This state of mind and set of ideas formed the consciousness of kin. In this reading, a people’s self-consciousness as “primary stage of kin consciousness” existed ever since the 15th century:

the Romanian people manifests in the way it calls itself, particularly in the fact that it constantly refuses to bear another name, according to the nominations given by foreigners. It manifests as an objective historical reality which grouped it together and constituted it; as the active carrier of its own language and it distinguishes itself either from other ethnic groups that live outside the borders of the Romanian state or from those that exist within these territories, but this differentiation is defined by mutual advantage and peaceful coexistence.

The steady development of this form of community into the 17th century demonstrated, according to Stănescu, “the unitary existence of the Romanian people as a community of kin

⁷² *Idem*, p. 971.

⁷³ *Idem*, p. 981.

with a correspondent consciousness.” The historian continued, echoing Iorga, by arguing that these markers of collective identity “were specific to the Romanian people”, for they “have a popular origin as they have been taken over and expressed intellectually by scholars [*cărturari*].”⁷⁴ Consciousness of kin was founded on its unity and its common origin (of course, the link Roman-Romanian) and, by the 17th century, it became the bedrock of a political doctrine – “the consciousness of a historical destiny”. A national ideology had thus developed by the end of the period taken into consideration. The latter was reinforced by “the struggle for independence and unity” caused by the confrontation with “a tremendous adversary, the Ottoman empire, which could only be confronted by the united forces of the entire Romanian people.” A further binding element was “the struggle for culture”, that is, “the espousal of Romanian language as a written one, of a language of culture and public life through the development of printing and education for a better knowledge of the historical past.”⁷⁵ For Stănescu, “all came together in a unity that gave meaning to the events circumscribed by the 15th and 17th centuries, which international impact made contemporary Europeans talk not only about a Romanian kin with a historical role and destiny, but also about their unity and origin.” This process characterized “the whole territory inhabited by Romanians, as it could be observed without exception in all the regions, from one corner to the other, of what the contemporaries call the ancient Dacia. All over this space one can remark the evolved forms of consciousness of kin and their unification as premises for a future national consciousness.”⁷⁶ At the same time, Stănescu argued that by the 17th century, Țara Românească was the center of the Romanians’ “struggle for liberation” and it had “the leading role” in the growth of the consciousness of kin. This was so

⁷⁴ *Idem*, p. 997.

⁷⁵ *Idem*, pp. 998-999.

⁷⁶ *Idem*, p. 999.

primarily because on this territory the three meanings of “romîn-romînesc” (general ethnic, juridical-political, social) appeared together at the same time. It was no coincidence for the historian that Michael the Brave’s “great war of liberation” and his subsequent unification of the Romanian states started from Țara Românească. Furthermore, this represented for him the original explanation for a nation-state with the capital in Bucharest.⁷⁷

The article of the editor in chief of *Studii* was an exercise in the construction of the primordial bases of the Nation. In his own words, there were “traditions as old as the history of the entire people that underline its unity despite the diversity of socio-economic formations that appeared through history.”⁷⁸ A fundamental element of the master-narrative of national identity under communism was formulated here: there were suprastructural elements - consciousness of kin that organically and necessarily morphed into national consciousness - which remained constant despite the historical progression of the base. This was a crucial sign of ideological hybridization – historical materialism met with perennialism. Immutable markers of the Nation would appear in history as indicators of what had already been there only to be enriched and materialized by the progress of history, which in its turn meant the ultimate fulfillment in the most superior form of socio-economic organization - socialism. In his article, Stănescu entrenched the ethnic, cultural, and psychological elements for the definition of the Nation under the communist regime. The big-picture of the latter being the product of the modern period remained in place. The Nation’s symbolic and historical constituents, however, were strengthened by means of definition and of placement in elder times than ever before in historiography after 1945. The historical front had come back to the primary principle of Romanian history writing in the modern era: “the unitary vision of the Romanian kin of

⁷⁷ *Idem*, p. 1000

⁷⁸ *Idem*.

everywhere and the unshakable belief in its redemption.”⁷⁹ The certainty of a golden future therefore lay in the constant manifestation of a united Nation in all its incarnations across history.

2. N. Iorga’s Rehabilitation and the Organic Unified Nation

The resurgence of this hybrid “recurrent perennialism”⁸⁰ on the historical front was officialized by the rehabilitation of N. Iorga. For our purposes, the commemoration of a quarter of century from his death and the ensuing national festival of rehabilitation indicated the adoption of both science and politics of the organic analogy in the system’s story of identity. And, to paraphrase Anthony D. Smith, it became again natural to see the Nation as “a collective exemplar exhibiting the qualities of gradualism, development, and cumulation.” It also helped that until 1964, the historical front had already gathered “the ‘hard data’ and the tangible remains” of the distant past of the national community.⁸¹ By 1965, it was beyond doubt for historians and the party that, throughout history, “the Romanian nation has always aspired toward three goals: national unity, social reform, and the establishment of a democratic regime that would guarantee personal freedom, equality before the law, freedom of speech, and national

⁷⁹ Andrei Oțetea, „N. Iorga – Istoric al Românilor”, *Ibidem*, pp. 1225.

⁸⁰ Anthony D. Smith, *Nationalism: Theory, Ideology, and History*, second edition, revised and updated (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2010) pp. 54-55. “Recurrent perennialism” can encompass “organic primordialism”, but it can also manifest itself in non-essentialist narratives of identity. This conceptual distinction helps explain the complexities of national discourses after 1965, when one can distinguish cultural groups on the basis of their acceptance of varying degrees of organicity in their national narratives. The persistence of a perennial idea about the Nation can be best exemplified by one of the conclusions of Zigu Ornea’s volume *Traditionalism și modernism*. This historian of ideas, of Jewish origin, who produced rich synthesis on Romanian modern intellectual history, who established the cannon of interpreting the Romanian extreme-right in the cultural field, a committed left-wing thinker closed his volume with a defense of the national idea: „it is a harmful prejudice to advocate the idea that the unwavering defense of the concept of ethnicity in art is unconditionally associated with political right-wing anti-democratism which ultimately degenerated into racism and fascism. [Many] have defended the idea of specificity in art, but they were also intransigent democrats. [...] The disaster of extremist *gândirism* and *trăirism* does not justify the stigma on the concept of national particularity toward which, for almost two decades, many suspicious and accusatory glances were thrown.” See Ornea, *Traditionalism și modernism...*, pp. 466-467.

⁸¹ Smith, *Ibidem*, p. 53.

sovereignty.”⁸² A. Oțetea’s quote could also be read as an Aesopic knock on the regime, but one must not forget the RCP did claim to have finally achieved all of the things listed by the historian.

N. Iorga re-entered as a central figure of the tradition of history-writing in Romania in 1960 by means of a special session at the RPR Academy. In 1964, he figured prominently in the Bucharest University Centennial. One author established a direct link between Iorga and the present historical front: “no scholar has ever brought a contribution of greater importance to the knowledge of universal and Romanian history than Iorga. Many of today’s historians were formed at his school.”⁸³ The signs of the teacher cult were already showing. During the special session celebrating the University centennial M. Berza, D. Almaș, and N Copoiu presented papers on Iorga’s “great contributons” (*mărețe realizări*) on various issues. On October 12, 1964, Iorga’s bust (along with V Pârvan’s and B. P. Hașdeu’s) was placed in the lobby of the Department of Law, one of the central locations of Bucharest University. As already discussed, Iorga figured prominently in the plan for and the ensuing discussions about a monograph on the history of historiography.

The pinnacle of the celebration of the ‘teacher of Romanian historiography’ reached a climax in 1965 at the commemoration of his assassination by the Iron Guard. On October 27, the presidium of the special session of the RSR Academy dedicated to the event was formed among other by Manea Mănescu, secretary of the RCP’s Central Committee, Athanasie Joja, member of the State Council, Pompiliu Macovei, vice-president of State Council for Culture and the Arts, Jean Livescu, deputy minister of Education. A day earlier, at Vălenii de Munte, the memorial

⁸² See A. Oțetea review to N. Bălcescu, *Opere: Corespondență vol. IV*, ediție critică de G Zane, București, Edit Acad. ROR, 1964, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, nr.6, anul XVII, 1964, pp. 1431.

⁸³ Velichi, „Dezvoltarea Universității din București...”, p. 1287.

house of N Iorga was opened. Among the participants were: Ioan Moraru, vicepresident of the State Council for Culture and the Arts, Miron Constantinescu, deputy minister of education, Dumitru Dumitrescu, first secretary of the RSR Academy, Mihai Băcescu, the president of the Committee of Museums. In other words, the public manifestations related to the commemoration were officiated and headed by representatives of the most important institutions of the party-state on issues of education and culture.

At the same time, some of the most influential cultural weeklies, nationally and regionally, dedicated special issues or sections of articles to Iorga's memory and activity: *Contemporanul*, *Gazeta Literară*, *Luceafărul*, *Tribuna* (in this Cluj based weekly among the authors selected were Petru Comarnescu, the founder of the Criterion circle, one of the leaders of the 1927 generation, and American historian Keith Hitchens), and *Ramuri*. M. Berza, Iorga's former close associate, published an article in *Scînteia*. V Netea wrote an article in *România liberă*. In 1965, the publishing house for literature (a choice made most likely in order to ensure widest distribution possible) put on the market an anthology of selected texts by Iorga in two volumes with a preface by Berza.⁸⁴

But this spectacle of national unity in celebrating a father of Romanian history-writing and culture reached its most elaborated form in the special issue of *Studii* that appeared toward the end of 1965. With the exception of M. Berza, who was already highly profiled in the celebration in other situations, the entire leadership of the historical front contributed (only with other historians of lesser bureaucratic mantle but high profile experts in their respective fields):

⁸⁴ The two volumes contained selections from Iorga's memoirs *O viață de om*, texts about Vlad the Impaler, Stephen the Great, Michael the brave, about personalities of Romanian and international scientific and cultural personalities, sections of his travelogues about Romania and other countries, as well as a selection of Iorga's journalistic writings. See Nicolae Iorga, *Pagini alese*, volm I și II, antologie și prefață de M. Berza, (București: Editura pentru Literatură, 1965)

Iorgu Iordan, as representative of the Academy, A. Oțetea, C. daicoviciu, Em. Condurachi, Ștefan Pascu, Al. Elian, E. Stănescu, Ștefan Ștefănescu, Titu Georgescu, N. Adăniloaie. The historical front was bowing to its doyen...

The special issue was organized in accordance to what Romanian considered at the time “the causal nexus of the great problems of Romanian history” (A. Oțetea): the ethnic origin, the continuity, and the unitary development of the Romanians, and the intrinsic originality of their civilization. National history was extolled as “the history of Romanians everywhere” (*istoria românilor de pretutindeni* – Șt. Pascu). The projected image of N. Iorga was that of the historian who founded a “new vision in which the Romanian people are one and the same organism, which development unfolds in a unitary fashion.”⁸⁵ Under the circumstances, “it was the duty of the historian to approach from a unitary point of view those things that have one organic life and one generating energy...when there is only *one* development and all life’s manifestations come together within it, each to their assigned place.”⁸⁶ This new paradigm was one of a history of “a forever the same Romania, the creation of the ‘people of the earth’ [the peasants, n.a.] invested with ‘the seal of Rome’, supported and framed, within Oriental Romanity, by its language, ancestral traditions, by the multilateral power of creation of its sons, unconquerable hearth and home (*vatră*) of the Romanian kin.”⁸⁷ Moreover, a principle of originality ruled this unitary history, which, by invocation of Iorga, existed in direct proportion with ethnic individuality, with the people’s general ability for original creation.⁸⁸ Ultimately, the Romanian people were, by way of Iorga, a necessary and permanent creation of history.

⁸⁵ Andrei Oțetea, „N. Iorga – Istorice al Românilor”, *Ibidem*, pp. 1221.

⁸⁶ Iorga *apud* N. Adăniloaie, „Nicolae Iorga – Istorice al războiului pentru independență națională”, *Ibidem*, p. 1394.

⁸⁷ Vasile Netea, „N Iorga istorice al unității naționale”, *Ibidem*, pp. 1413-1414.

⁸⁸ Valentin Al. Georgescu, „N Iorga și istorice dreptului românesc”, *Ibidem*, pp. 1350.

The idea of a “vertical, demotic nation” (Anthony D. Smith) was now confirmed by the validation of tradition. Iorga’s ideas about the Romanians’ as originally a democratic, peasant nation were discussed analyzed by various authors, though not always endorsed. In this reading, Romania was a country of national Romanity and the idea of an independent, the national state originated among the free, landowning peasants (*moșneni*), who never wished for conquests, only struggled to defend their Motherland.⁸⁹ Simultaneously, this peasant origin permitted the Romanians to maintain their originality, which according to Iorga, as interpreted by legal historian Valentin Georgescu, went as far back as the Thracians. Consequently, Georgescu, Ștefănescu, and Pascu stressed that Iorga rose against the “the anarchic individualism of the 19th century” counterpoising it to the healthy, organic collectivism of the Romanians’ popular traditions (in law, economy, or politics). For example, Georgescu quoted Iorga, who stated that “individualismul is foreign to our legal system...which is a system of natural solidarity, one of the strictest ones.”⁹⁰

Furthermore, the Romanian, original principles of law were founded on the “live Thracian and Illyric law” on the basis of which a legal-normative Romanian specificity was based and later developed by organic amalgamation.⁹¹ At the same time, at the core of a people’s history lay its primordial and developmentally acquired energies. N. Adăniloie, starting from this principle put forth Iorga’s conclusion that history, generally speaking, must be “the history of the national forces, of their development and of the influences” they creatively absorb.⁹² Iorga’s ideas of ancestral tradition and social solidarity were therefore invoked to reinforce arguments for collectivism and anti-cosmopolitanism.

⁸⁹ Șt. Ștefănescu, „Nicolae Iorga – istoric al raporturilor agrare din țările române”, *Ibidem*, p. 1316-1317.

⁹⁰ Georgescu, *Ibidem*, p.1352.

⁹¹ Georgescu, *Ibidem*, p. 1350.

⁹² Adăniloie, *Ibidem*, p. 1394.

The overarching thesis taken from Iorga and now officialized by the special issue was that of the permanences of history: territory, race, and idea. At a conference in Zurich in 1938, Iorga explained this concept: the territory was *terra mater*, it was the people's "sovereign earth that, with its neighboring lands (*vecinătățile*) and with its horizon, imposes its will." The race was actually the national community defined by an original culture of descent. Or, to use V. Netea's explanation, in Iorga's view the race was "that ethnic creation of the natural environment expressed in a unity of culture, forged slowly and subject to countless influences of which no one can escape and from which ultimately the people itself is born, the *neam* - master of the land of its procreation (*zămislire*)."⁹³ The race was a proto-ethnic, unifying marker of identity. The third permanence, the idea, was by definition, for the Romanians, the national one: "the idea as abstract power and the remembrance of successful action, which remonstrating gaze no one can avoid, that turns into instinct thus becoming even more powerful."⁹⁴ The permanences constituted the founding elements of a nation's organicity, the original bidding principles of the Romanian constituency across history that gave the latter its necessary unitary character.

At the same time, these permanences also formed the bedrock of national sovereignty: territory, race, and idea configured the *normal* space for the exercise of a nation's historical rights on the basis of which absolute independence was claimed. Unsurprisingly, Titu Georgescu approvingly quoted, in his piece about Iorga's activity at the end of the 1930s, the historian, who claimed that "we have to defend our borders as they are, as our ethnicity compels and according

⁹³ Netea, *Ibidem*, p. 1423. The cardinal premise of Iorga's concept of race is that of assimilation – this was obvious from his views on the Jewish question in Romania. The assimilationist facet of Romanian nationalism under communism was already apparent, and it will later accentuate, in mid-sixties in relation to national minorities.

⁹⁴ „Permanențele istoriei”, Comunicare ținută la Congresul internațional de istorie de la Zurich (Septembrie 1938), in Iorga, *Generalități*, pp. 239-255.

to our national necessities that today have turned into principle.”⁹⁵ With permanences fundamentally conditioning the fixing of a people in history, then the minorities within a national territory become accidents of historical development. Georgescu again subscribed to Iorga, “here a hand of seed, there another fistful, a scattered sowing (*semănătură răzleață*), while we are a forest born from the depth of the earth.”⁹⁶

The historical front fully adopted Iorga’s concept of organicity as both existence and process in history. It became a core element of the master-narrative about the Romanian Nation under communism, part and parcel of the RCP’s party line. The latter phenomenon will have direct impact on legislation from policies concerning minorities, to the decree banning abortion, or the laws of scientifically regulating the nourishment of the population. The determinism of scientific socialism combined with the organicity of nationalism into a radically transformative vision of national community – the multilaterally developed socialist society forging itself into the golden age of communism.

The general conclusion that can be drawn from the historical front’s two programmatic moments which I described above (Stănescu’s article on the premises of national consciousness and the *Studii* issue dedicated to Iorga) is that by 1965 the epistemic community successfully transformed the axiom of necessity in history-production under communism: necessities of class, of the social-formation, unified with the necessities of Nation, of the political community of descent. In Romania, as a result of cumulative policies of planned science, the historical front accomplished a synthesis between, on the one hand, its thematic priorities and traditions, and, on the other hand, the regime’s directives for a scientific construction of collective identity and justification of regime individuality. The resulting master-narrative was a combination between

⁹⁵ Titu Georgescu, „Nicolae Iorga împotriva hitlerismului”, *ibidem*, p. 1432.

⁹⁶ *Idem*.

the resurgent obsessions of pre-1945 historiography about origin, continuity, national being, historical destiny, or cultural superiority/inferiority and the regime's endemic defensiveness based on an original lack of legitimacy, its transformist vision of society, and its unrelenting fixation with identity.

The Nation in history was once again presented not only as a reality but also as a form of moral consciousness that history-production had to permanently reinforce and justify. This form of perennial belonging and solidarity manifested itself in the projected image of a millennial, organic, united *Volksgemeinschaft* that surged through history fulfilling its special mission of deliverance into communism. This Nation functioned as a mythomoteur⁹⁷ for the regime politics of building socialism in one country. It consequently created discourse and personal conditionings among both historians and, more generally, within the population that, even in the years of the regime's demise, proved extremely resistant and difficult to break in favor of alternative ones. The mirage of a national civilization that came about or was being completed under communism in Romania tempted many, either scholars or citizens, making disenchantment from it ever more difficult. The myths and symbolic appetites of public and academic discourse in post-communism have greatly proved the depth of this legacy in Romanian society.

⁹⁷ J. Amstrong argued that "the legitimising power of individual mythic structures tend to be enhanced by fusion with other myths in a *mythomoteur* defining identity in relation to a specific polity." See John Amstrong, *Nations before Nationalism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982), p. 182.

Conclusion

At the end of his enlightening study on the uses of *heimat* in the GDR for the purpose of creating a sense of nationhood under socialism, Jan Palmowski remarked that „what distinguished this country from its Eastern neighbors was not *that* nationhood became central to the construction of identity from the 1960s, but *how* this process occurred.”¹ The point he makes could be generalized: by the end of sixties, *all* communist countries of the Soviet bloc experienced the resurgence, in a form or another, of national identitarian master-narratives. At the same time, the entire region had thoroughly sustained and adapted to the shocks of de-Stalinization. This context allowed for both communalities and differences.

Two main factors generated diversity within the socialist camp: the level of ideological re-positioning on the part of the power holders; and, the types of re-imaginings of national communities within party-state institutions and milieus. Traditions and pre-communist culture functioned by now as legitimating keys for the new social order’s mobilization goals. Throughout Eastern Europe, at the time, all the regimes had declared the construction of the groundwork of socialism completed. Writing back and representing the Nation became a filter of understanding socialist transformation.² The sixties therefore brought about a crucial synthesis

¹ Jan Palmowski, *Inventing a Socialist Nation: Heimat and the Politics of Everyday Life in the GDR, 1945-1990* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 305.

² For example, Stephen Berger underscored that in 1960s, in the GDR, “the national paradigm continued to form a key characteristic of GDR historiography throughout the 1960s. Only after 1971 did GDR historians tone down their nationalist orientation and begin instead to emphasize internationalism and the GDR’s rootedness as a separate German nation in the east European bloc of Communist nation-states.” See Stephen Berger, “National Paradigm and Legitimacy: Uses of Academic History Writing in the 1960s” in Patrick Major and Jonathan Osmond (eds.), *The Workers and Peasants’ State: Communism and Society in East Germany under Ulbricht 1945-71* (Manchester/New York: Manchester University Press, 2002), p. 256. For the case of Bulgaria see Daskalov, *The Making of a Nation*. For Czechoslovakia, see Maciej Gornny, “Past in the Future,” *Ibidem*. For Poland see the two debates organized by

with determinant impact upon the further development of each of the Soviet satellites in the region. There were, on the one hand, the individual parties' and leaderships' political and cultural systems with their specific characteristics; and on the other hand, the rules, rhythms, memories, and authors of the identitarian narratives regulating the collective traditions upon which socialism attained now relied³. For each country of the Soviet bloc, the communist program of modernization had generated a re-rooting, re-embedding of identitarian myths that counteracted the former's tradition-eroding force. New utopian visions of ideal societies came about on the basis of 'invented traditions' that had created, to higher or smaller degrees and with wider or narrower scopes, a sense of the communist present's and future's continuity with the past.⁴ Specificity resulted from the combination between the nature of the communism in power (reformed, welfare dictatorship, autonomous Stalinism, etc.) and the type of nationalisms that permeated each society's economy of symbolic capital and/or public, political discourse. In other words, what distinguished communisms among them was the individual parties' dedication to the continuation of the radical transformation of the re-imagined national communities they ruled.

In Romania, by mid-sixties, the illiberal modernity⁵ heralded by the communist party was the result of a polity that had successfully asserted its socialist *and* national sovereignty both

the Institute of Party History in Warsaw on the Comintern and on the problem of the nation in the works of the classics of Marxism-Leninism (chapter VI).

³ Anthony D Smith stressed that "nationalism has its own rules, rhythms and memories, which shape its contours, endowing them with a recognizably 'nationalist' political shape and directing them to familiar national goals." See Smith, *Nationalism: Theory, Ideology...*, p. 3.

⁴ I am paraphrasing Roger Griffin. According to him "a central feature of modernization [is] that, wherever it impinges on a traditional culture, it will provoke a counter-reaction to its corrosive effects on the highly specific sense of ritual, rootedness, and identity traditionally provided." See Roger Griffin, "Modernity under the New Order. The Fascist Project for Managing the Future", in *A Fascist Century*, edited by Matthew Feldman (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), p. 29.

⁵ In *Beyond Totalitarianism*, Hoffmann and Timm argued that Stalinism (along with Nazism) sought to transform society, reshape social bonds, to rewrite the social contract along "fundamentally illiberal yet modernist lines. Individual liberties were rejected in favor of a collectivist project of "creating a classless, socialist society to serve as

within and without the borders of the country. The distinctive feature of the regime in Romania was that it circumscribed its identity on the basis of a popular community that was conceived as a “promethean creator of civilization.”⁶ At its core lay a radical vision of social utopia (the homogenized society working as one for the achievement of the end of history – from 1969, the multilaterally developed socialist society) and the vision of the social body as a transhistorical agent of national emancipation (a vanguard, united, organic “demotic nation”). The present dissertation has shown how an epistemic community developed, within a system of planned science that was driven by an unswerving ideal of building socialism in one country, its own syncretic tradition. The latter fit within the symbolic economy of the regime, playing a crucial role in the latter’s reproduction. Rather than simply being a legitimizing discipline or a handmaiden of ideology, history built its own structures and values of knowledge-production. However, history (and science)-production overlapped and intersected with political discourse, facilitating the appropriation of the resulting knowledge and textualizations by „the ideological powers of vertical socialization.”⁷

Rather than a “subordination of the imposed Marxist-Leninist discourse to the terms of the national discourse, resulting in the subversion of Marxist-Leninism’s central terms”⁸, the accommodation of the Nation (as master symbol or personification of tradition) with definitions of regime and/or party individuality was a phenomenon of hybridization that resulted in

model for the emancipation of humanity as a whole.” Similarly, in the same volume, Peter Fritzsche and Jochen Hellbeck stated that Stalinism, though illiberal, was “profoundly modern because of [its] dedication to remaking and redefining the human species. [Its] project encompassed and alternative, illiberal modernity.” See Hoffmann and Timm, “Utopia Biopolitics...”, *Ibidem*, p. 87 and Fritzsche and Hellbeck, “The New Man...”, p. 302.

⁶ Griffin, “Modernity under the New Order...”, *Ibidem*, p. 42.

⁷ Heiko Feldner, “History in the Academy: Objectivity and partisanship in the Marxist historiography of the German Democratic Republic,” in Patrick Major and Jonathan Osmond (eds.), *The Workers and Peasants’ State*, pp. 274.

⁸ Verdery, *National Ideology...*, 139. The point where my argument departs from that of Verdery’s is that one should not look for a pecking order within the master-narrative of Romanian national ideology under communism. I have shown in my dissertation how various discursive codes and institutional practices functioned differently according to various contexts.

“national Stalinism” (Vladimir Tismaneanu). To put it differently, in the “Stalinist epistemology” (Brian Kassof) of Romanian communism *both* the classics of Marxism-Leninism *and* the founding fathers of the country’s culture and science were employed to define, order, transform, and homogenize reality, collectivity, and the self. Moreover, as I have shown with the case of the nationalism of “conservative palingenesis” (Marius Turda)⁹, or what Amir Heinen called the “new nationalism”, the type of Nation integrated in the RCP’s program of modernization basically *reflected* rather than *substituted* the Stalinist social body. My analysis of the evolution of history-production since late fifties revealed how the late 19th and 20th century’s Romanian version of *Volksgemeinschaft* merged Stalin’s popular community.

Professionalization, institutionalization, thematic self-determination, recuperation of tradition, status construction, and ultimately self-realization on the historical front took place under circumstances of the formation of a national planned science. The cultural revolution in communist Romania evolved into a national scientific revolution that had a radical impact upon the understanding of the epistemic agents’ selves, on the profession, and on the criteria of objectivity. History-writing in Romania became subordinated not only to the partisanship for the new and the progressive on the road to the socialist order.¹⁰ It was also dependent on its ability to further the national cause. Historians were again the chroniclers and hermeneutists of national deliverance across history. By mid-1960s, history as socialist science was not merely instrumental by means of historical materialism, but it was so by self-professed national missionarism as well. In the end, historians (or scientists, more generally speaking) found

⁹ An alternative characterization of this trend is that of “neo-conservative ethnicism of the turn of the century.” See Trencsényi, “‘Imposed Authenticity’”, *Ibidem*, p. 35.

¹⁰ I am paraphrasing a statement by German historian, Jurgen Kuczynski, made in 1956, according to whom under socialism “the development of [historical] science demands rather a *specific partisanship*. It demands partisanship for progress...It demands *partisanship for the new and the progressive to which society advances*. To be partisan for reality – that is the literal meaning of the word objectivity.” See Feldner, “History in the Academy...”, *Ibidem*, p. 266.

common ground with the party not only through socialization and thematic accommodation, but also on the basis of a self-proclaimed ethos – the national mission. These two fundamental conditionings regulated the institutional code of knowledge organization and each individual's professional attitude within this system.

In the first three chapters of the dissertation I mapped out the features of the Soviet model of planned science and cultural revolution and their application in the case of Romania. My argument was that the “academic regime” (Gyorgy Peteri) resulting from the (self-)Sovietization of scientific (i.e. history) production experienced a gradual nationalization under circumstances of the regime's gradual affirmation of individuality as result of Khrushchev's de-Stalinization. Three phenomena defined this stage (1956-1963) of the historical front's evolution: first, historians challenged through their own epistemic codes and internal institutional channels (with the necessary appeal to political authority) Mihail Roller's “reign of great dictator-scientist”¹¹; second, the party continuously pursued policies of better integrating historical research within the system of planned science. The front was restructured by means of further institutionalization and through mobilization with the purpose of achieving “great scientific projects”, primarily the national history treatise (*Istoria României*) and the treatise of the history of Transylvania. And third, these changes took place under circumstances of the RWP's constant weariness with a view to “ideological contamination”, which led to a wave of purges within higher education and a re-affirmation of orthodoxy within the epistemic community (see the case of the journal *Studii*). Nevertheless, these three phenomena merged into several crucial developments: a) the formation of a polycentric historical front led more often than not by individuals whose first epistemic socialization was in pre-1945 times, but who had also fully internalized the discursive,

¹¹ David-Fox and Péteri, “On the Origins and Demise of the Communist Academic Regime” in David-Fox and Peteri, *Ibidem*.

behavioral, and organizational codes of Marxist-Leninist planned science; b) the selective rehabilitation of tradition – by themes, by personnel (including historians who had been arrested, imprisoned, or isolated until 1955), by methodology, and by founding-fathers; c) the RWP consolidated and expanded a system of control and co-option that the result of the continuation of the effort of self-Sovietizing Romanian science.

In the following chapters, I follow how the RWP's political discourse increasingly overlapped with the fundamental approaches that were being developed within the historical front. Moreover, I emphasize the permanent *dialogue*, through institutional channels and personal relationships, between historians and party ideologues. These chapters are an exemplification of how the new system of planned science produced knowledge and what was the latter's role within the politics of legitimation and identity within the communist regime. The overarching idea that I am advancing in this section of the dissertation is that the historians' practices and narratives of self-determination found a common ground with those of the party's. On the one hand, the historical front had founded its re-professionalization on the basis of the departure from *rollerism*, which was criticized as a school of national history falsification ("vulgar sociology") and as having violated the rules of true scholarship (*conjuncturism*). The return to national themes and to 'truths' about the Nation in history was inextricably linked to re-affirmation of epistemic codes. On the other hand, the RWP increasingly defined its identity in counter-distinction to what it perceived as hegemonic tendencies of the Moscow center (either directly or through proxies – other Comecon countries, especially Hungary). Therefore, its program of building socialism in one country was gradually re-formulated in terms of self-centeredness and domestic authenticity. In the context of the RWP's rejection of de-Stalinization and of its implication in the Sino-Soviet dispute, the Romanian communist leadership began to

conceive of itself as representing of the Nation. By 1964, the RWP claimed to embody the interests of the whole nation (still defined as people). The classics of Marxist-Leninism were called upon the Romanian side to confirm and reinforce not only ideological orthodoxy and credentials, but also national sovereignty. Under the circumstances, the overlaps, intersections, and common actions in the realm of historiography and ideology transformed the writing of history into one of the cardinal ways of bringing the Nation into Stalinism.

The common, nationally-defined interests of the epistemic community and of the party in the Romania were most apparent in my case study of the alternative geographies of science. The latter came about as a response to the project of political, economic, and academic integration within the Comecon, but they also reflected traditions within Romanian historiography. By means of mutual recognition of the validity of self-determination politics, historians became dignitaries of the regime's foreign policy of knowledge. International congresses, conferences, and organizations were mediums of extolling scholarly prestige, regime achievements, and identitarian exceptionalism. Moreover, by 1964, when the RWP officially formulated its policy of a national path to socialism, the historical front had already developed the foundational textualizations of the socialist nation: "(1) the ancient roots of the Romanian people; (2) the continuity of the Romanians on the actual territory of the country from ancient times to the present; (3) the unity of the Romanian people throughout its entire history; and (4) Romanians' continuous struggle for independence."¹²

¹² Dragoș and Cristina Petrescu, two Romanian political scientists, provide this list with a reference to the 1974 Political Program of the Romanian Communist Party. In my dissertation, though, I prove how these four prerequisites of history-production were gradually defined and perfected from mid-fifties until 1963, so much earlier. In my opinion the 1974 Political Program was a synthetic summary of *all* features of Romanian historiography as they developed within the specific ideological circumstances of the persistent Stalinism of the communist regime. Furthermore, I believe that this was a document that tried to make a return to the "one textbook/*Short Course* paradigm" on the basis of the national Stalinist hybridization in history-production. In other words, the Political Program did not bring anything new, but it was a symbolic compendium of the life and role of

Between 1964 and 1966, the Nation was officially integrated in the political discourse of Romanian communism. During the same period, the historical front also fully and manifestly integrated it in its production. The symbolic progression characterizing the master narrative of historiography was that of ancestors - kin (*neam*) - people – nation – socialist nation. The developments that began in the second half of the fifties had now reached their climax into the principle of a unitary demotic nation that continuously evolved on the road to progress in time. Furthermore, national history was circumscribed on the basis of the idea of its organicity, which in its turn acquired a double meaning: the Marxist-Leninist one based on historical materialism; and the nationalist one rooted on the notion of the national being's renewal in modernity grounded on its ancient traditions and specific physiognomy. Taking into account the political program of the party (as it was apparent both in the 1964 Declaration and at the 1965 Ninth Congress), the communist polity declared itself a nationalizing socialist nation-state. The building of socialism took the form of *national rebirth*. In this context, the system of planned science, and the historical front within it, was designated as a *locus* of nationalizing socialist transformation. Historians had officially regained their pre-1945 function of apostles of the Nation.

By 1966, Romanian historiography's utopias of national salvation increasingly overlapped with Marxist-Leninist eschatology. The Stalinist civilization was now inscribed, translated, adjusted, and legitimized in reference to a national context. The popular community, this civilization's *object* and *subject*, was defined as a socialist nation that was the result of a continuous process of historical development and which could trace its origins, features, and

nationalism and Stalinism in the political discourse of the Romanian Communist Party. See Cristina Petrescu and Dragoş Petrescu "Mastering vs. Coming to Terms with the Past: A Critical Analysis of Post-Communist Romanian Historiography" in Sorin Antohi, Balázs Trencsényi and Péter Apor (eds.), *Narratives Unbound Historical Studies in Post-Communist Eastern Europe* (Budapest/New York: CEU Press, 2007), p. 317.

ideals as far back as possible into the past. The changes that appeared within the system of planned science in mid-sixties only strengthened and confirmed the national purpose of knowledge production, particularly in history. In conclusion, because of the internal developments within the epistemic community, of the latter's pre-1945 traditions, of the evolution of the communist party, of its ideology, and of the way the principle of sovereignty was framed, history's meaning as science, practice, and functionality would be indissolubly tied to the socialist Nation as the central textualization of regime legitimacy. The evolution and resulting features of history-production from 1955 to 1966 were the result of the gradual alignment of scientific personnel and institutions, of scholarship and political discourse, and, ultimately, of ideology along the lines of a re-imagination of the Romanians as a national community under Stalinism.

Was this a symptom of a "great retreat" (Nicholas Timasheff)¹³? Or, as Katherine Verdery put it, of the fact that the communist party in Romania after

years of trying to build up a state resting on a teleology of progressive change and an ideology of internationalism (with the acceptance of internal diversity) had ended in the realization that the state could adequately construct itself only in terms of what it had at first denied: a teleology of national continuity and an ideology of national values, premised on internal uniformity.¹⁴

First of all, Timasheff's point about Stalin's Soviet Union after 1934 and Verdery's observation about Romanian communism contain the valuable idea of a change in the ideological outlook of both regimes. However, both suffer from the fallacy of overlooking, to a lesser degree Timasheff¹⁵, the attainment of the socialism *within* the medium of essentializing identitarian

¹³ Nicholas S. Timasheff, *The Great Retreat – the Growth and Decline of Communism in Russia*, (New York: Arno Press, 1972).

¹⁴ Verdery, *National Ideology...*, p. 131.

¹⁵ I agree with Matthew E. Lenoe who argued that most readers schematize Timasheff's argument and that in fact Timasheff "emphasizes that the policy changes he describes are part of a synthesis of the Bolshevik project with prerevolutionary culture in a new Soviet culture, *not* a simple return to the prerevolutionary status quo." See

narratives about society.¹⁶ By 1966, under Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej and ongoing with Nicolae Ceaușescu, the communist party in Romania had achieved and it was expanding a program of modernization that did not depart in any significant way from that of Stalinism: nationalization of the means of production, industrialization, collectivization, exclusively state-owned property, homogenization, cultural revolution, etc.

Moreover, in my opinion, the hybridization with nationalism only accentuated the specific profile of the communist regime. The idea of an organic, unitary Nation aided policies that aimed at regulating the metabolism of society and the energies of the individual for the purpose of building the Stalinist social utopia in one country. A few examples of policies adopted in the last twenty years of the regime further my point. The 1966 decrees (nos. 770 and 771) banned abortion and were the foundation of a complex of pronatalist policies of the regime that constituted an extreme example of biopolitics.¹⁷ The territorial, administrative reorganization of the country in 1968 will become the background against which both the national strategy of heavy industrialization and the systematization of urban and rural areas will later develop (what at the time came to be called the ‘New Agrarian Revolution’). Or, the program for scientific alimentation of the population (first publicly discussed in 1982) that was the expression of Ceaușescu’s vision of the people’s welfare by means of administering their “health and strength to work.” One should not forget the permanent policies of total regulation and reconstruction of

Matthew E. Lenoe, “In Defense of Timasheff’s *Great Retreat*”, *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 5, 4 (Fall 2004), pp.722.

¹⁶ My argumentation on the subject of the “great retreat” owes a lot to the debate on this topic hosted by *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* issue 5, volume 4, in Fall 2004. See David L. Hoffmann, “Was There a “Great Retreat” from Soviet Socialism? Stalinist Culture Reconsidered,” pp. 651–74; Evgheni A. Dobrenko, “Socialism as Will and Representation, or What Legacy Are We Rejecting?”, pp. 675-708; Jeffrey Brooks, „Declassifying a ‘Classic’”, pp. 709-719; Matthew E. Lenoe, “In Defense of Timasheff’s *Great Retreat*”, pp.721–30; David L. Hoffmann, “Ideological Ballast and New Directions in Soviet History”, in, pp. 731–33.

¹⁷ For a comparative approach to the Romanian case see Corina Doboș, Luciana M. Jinga, și Florin S. Soare, *Politica pronatalistă a regimului Ceaușescu. O perspectivă comparativă* (București: Polirom, 2010).

the human habitat (both public and private), starting with early sixties all the way to the end of the regime. I am referring to a wide range of laws, from those ordering and controlling the amount of living space allotted in an apartment building, to the Pharaohnic “Victory of Socialism” project. Another example that speaks volumes about the regime’s utopian ethos was decree no. 225/1977 that disbanded half of the country’s penitentiaries. The principle underlying this decision was that the detainees could be better reeducated by state institutions, mass and communal organizations. Also one could point to law no. 24/1976 that instructed every able person to come before local authorities in order to be allocated into production. Before this, there was the decree no. 153/1970 that penalized any breaches of social coexistence. To complete the picture, there was also law no. 25 that criminalized “social parasitism”.¹⁸ These examples, though many others could be given, reveal that the ultimate aim of the policies of communist regime remained the fulfillment of the Stalinist civilization in Romania. Or, to put it differently, they show that the present and future the socialist Nation were creations of a process of radically transformative homogenization.

Bringing back the Nation by means, in our case, of high culture and politics of knowledge (i.e, history-production) into the political discourse and in the ideology of Romanian communism was not a retreat but a retrenchment of “socialism in one country.” It did allow a re-invention of Romanian Stalinism as a national totalitarian movement. It widened the space of regime legitimization and the ability for “socialist offensive”. It also expanded the resources of participation both among ‘experts’ and within the population at large. Once the communist party defined its modernizing polity as a nationalizing socialist nation-state, an individual’s array

¹⁸ For details about these laws, decrees, and policies see most recently Ruxandra Ivan (ed.) *Transformarea socialistă. Politici ale regimului comunist între ideologie și administrație* (București: Polirom, 2009) and Manuela Marin, *Originea și evoluția cultului personalității lui Nicolae Ceaușescu 1965-1989* (Alba Iulia: Altip, 2008).

options of belonging and co-option significantly broadened. A myriad of variations appeared within the pale of upward mobility and ethnic identification.

In the case of the historical front, the resulting social and institutional structures of epistemic production, control, and organization along with the historians' self-perceived traditional mission on behalf of the national cause generated an ample groundwork of consent and involvement. In the end, historians were "part and parcel of an operative network of mental socialization from above."¹⁹ Historians first contributed, in the process of their overhauling of the front within the system of planned science, to the coming of national Stalinism as an ideology of a reloaded communist regime. Then, second, they found themselves agents and objects of an apparatus of strategic knowledge about the Nation that successfully proliferated identitarian myths and narratives, which reproduced the legitimating claims of the party in power. From 1955 until 1966, historians fully integrated themselves, acquiring a central role, in the power grid of communist Romania's illiberal modernity.

Since 1955, Romanian communism searched for „one history founded on one conception of history [*o singură istorie, bazată pe o singură concepție despre istorie*].”²⁰ By 1974, the latter was officially codified in the Political Program of the Eleventh Party Congress. The Nation and the Party were now axiomatically one in history. They had already symbolically merged, first in 1964, and later, more powerfully and for the whole world to see, on August 21, 1968, when Nicolae Ceaușescu condemned the Soviet invasion in Czechoslovakia in the frantic applause of

¹⁹ Heiko Feldner, "History in the Academy...", *Idem*.

²⁰ N. Ceaușescu, *Expunere la consfătuirea de lucru a activului de partid din domeniul ideologiei și al activității politice și cultural-educative*, 9 iulie 1971, București: Editura Politică, 1971, p.61.

almost 100,000 people.²¹ The Nation was now cemented, like never before in its history, around the party and its Leader. To paraphrase, Charles de Gaulle, the Party and its Great Helmsmen (Dej and Ceaușescu) had found a way to get the Romanian people moving and to have things done.²²

²¹ Vladimir Tismaneanu and Bogdan Iacob, “Betrayed Promises: Nicolae Ceaușescu, the Romanian Communist Party, and the Crisis of 1968”, in Vladimir Tismaneanu (ed.), *Promises of 1968: Crisis, Illusion and Utopia* (Budapest/New York: CEU Press, 2010), pp. 257-283.

²² *Apud* Tony Judt, *Postwar*, p. 431.

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