Writing History in a Propaganda Institute

Political Power and Network Dynamics in Communist Romania

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Popescu-Puțuri la împlinirea vârstei de 70 de ani cu „Steaua Republicii
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Abstract

In 1990, the Institute for Historical and Socio-Political Studies of the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party was closed, since the Party was dissolved by the Romanian Revolution. Similar institutions had existed in all countries belonging to the Soviet bloc. This Institute was founded in 1951 under the name of the Party History Institute, and modelled on the Marx-Lenin-Engels Institute in Moscow. Since then, it served the Communist Party in producing thousands of books and journals on the history of the Party and of Romania, following Party orders. Previous research has portrayed the Institute as a loyal executioner of the Party's will, negating the agency of its history-writers in influencing the duties of the Institute. However, the recent opening of the Institute's archive has shown that a number of internal and previously obscured dynamics impacted on its activities.

This book is dedicated to the study of the Party History Institute, of the history-writers employed there, and of the narratives they produced. By studying the history-writers and their host institution, this study re-contextualizes the historiography produced under Communist rule by analysing the actual conditions under which it was written: the interrelation between dynamics of control and the struggle for resources, power and positions play a fundamental role in this history. This is the first scholarly inquiry about a highly controversial institute that struggled in order to follow the constantly shifting Party narrative canon, while competing for material resources with rival Party and academic institutions. The main actors in this study are the history-writers: Party veterans, young propagandists and educated historians, in conflicting networks and groups, struggled in order to gain access to the limited resources and positions provided by the Party, and in order to survive the political changes imposed by the leadership. By doing so they succeed, on many occasions, to influence the activities of the Institute.

Keywords: historiography, history-writing, Romania, history and power, sovereignty, communism, national-communism, resources, narrative canon, networking.

Acknowledgments

The pages that follow aim at historicizing this dissertation and its author, after many books and authors have been historicized unmercifully in this work. The list of persons and institutions that I have to thank is very long, since they have all contributed to the making of this manuscript.

I dedicate this dissertation to my wife, lover, companion, and friend Eleonora. Before I got to know you, I had started to believe that the positive qualities of mankind were a myth. You have succeeded in giving me back trust in human beings, by letting me see the sunny side of life: joy, light, love, respect, compassion and understanding. Thank you, my precious pearl. The future is ours. You are unique and this book is for you!

Au bout de la nuit (*il y a déjà l'aurore*),
30 March, 2016. Lidingö, Sweden.

The author

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Introduction

We, communists, consider it is a creditable mission to study, know and honour dutifully all those who contributed to building up our nation, all those who laid down their lives for the Romanian people's national and social freedom.

Nicolae Ceaușescu[1]

The historical image of our people, of its land, of socialist Romania in the contemporary world is the result of a past long experience, of a truthful historical construction that testifies to the national specificity, the unity of the people, the independence of the state and the constancy of its existence.

Ion Popescu-Puțuri[2]

Stalin did exactly what a man in his position should have done.

Nicolae Ceaușescu[3]

In the summer of 1989, official celebrations were prepared in Romania for the forty-fifth anniversary of the fall of the dictatorship of Ion Antonescu in August 1944. The coup d'etat was at that time described by the official media, as the "social and national, antifascist and anti-imperialist liberation revolution of August 1944". For the occasion, Ion Popescu-Puțuri, director of the Institute for Socio-Political and Historical Studies of the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party (until 1966 called the Party History Institute), had the privilege of writing the opening article of the

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[1] Nicolae Ceaușescu, *Romania on the path of completing socialist construction*, vol. 1 (Bucharest: Meridiane, 1969), 435, quoted in Katherine Verdery, *National Ideology under Socialism* (Berkeley: California University Press, 1991), 117.
[2] Ion Popescu-Puțuri, *Istoria Poporului Român în concepția președintelui Nicoale Ceaușescu* (Bucharest: Editura Politica, 1988), 14.
[3] Quoted in Juan Linz, Albert Stepan, *L'Europa post-comunista* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2000), 207.

annals of the Institute, with the title "The Fight for Freedom and Unity – the Permanence in History of the Romanian People". The introduction and conclusion of the article pinpointed the current state of Party historiography:

> The approach of national history from the point of view of unity and continuity is a necessity generated by the complex situations that our people have experienced during two thousand years: it is necessary to show that the ancestors of the Romanian people in ancient times – the Geto-Dacians – who created a powerful centralised and independent state under Burebista, in the first century B. C. – continued their existence, after the wars with the Romans, in the very same territory, and have maintained their own characteristics. […] The infinite column[4] of Romanian history and the moral-political unity of the entire people have confirmed, thus, in a strong way, the fundamental leading role of […] all our greatest socialist realizations, of the accomplishment of unparalleled relevance for our great times[sic], the *Era Nicolae Ceauşescu*.[5]

The reader should note the perfect assonance between the political rhetoric of Ceauşescu's initial quote and the historiographical canon expressed by Popescu-Puţuri. Both were the products of a political canon elaborated during the 1960s, reaching an almost total consonance by the late 1980s. In the historiography of the last phase of the Ceauşescu regime, one notes the presence of interwar period historians, Party archive documents, and a vast number of Nicolae Ceauşescu's speeches *per article*. Michael Shafir, analyst at Radio Free Europe, pointed out in 1988 that Ceauşescu and the domestic media continued to combine claims to Marxism with appeals to Romanian nationalist pride in order to oppose the reforms proposed by Gorbachevism.[6] This was the regime's strategy to keep its legitimacy. In 1988, Romania was politically the most isolated country in Europe, with the possible exception of Albania.

The isolation of Romania at the international level was reflected internally by the isolation of political power. The regime ruled with despotic authoritarianism over a population increasingly affected by poverty. For political power, and for its historiography, life in the thousands of countryside villages was insignificant; life for those in the countryside continued to be based on the harvest, being at the mercy of climate conditions and of an

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[4] "Column" probaby refers to the monument by Constantin Brancuşi "Endless Column".
[5] Ion Popescu-Puţuri, 'Lupta pentru libertate şi unitate – permanenţă a istoriei poporului român', *Anale de Istorie 3* (1989): 3, 18.
[6] Michael Shafir, '"Ceausescuism" against "Gorbachevism"', Radio Free Europe Research, Rad Background Report/95 (Eastern Europe), 30 May 1988.

arrogant, despotic political power which provided no help. Many people felt that Romania had been severed from its own roots, and felt exiled in their own country, to use two expressions of the poet and novelist Paul Miclau.[7] This condition represented, in the eighties, the "normality" for the majority of the population. This silent majority was listening, in the safety of their homes, to the forbidden radio broadcasts of Radio Free Europe, and laughing at the megalomaniac and often grotesque excesses of the regime, depicted by the intellectuals who would contribute to lead, after 1989, the cultural transition towards democracy. In the meantime, life went on, and no one really expected the whole carousel to stop when it did so suddenly in December 1989. For millions, the communist regime constituted the normality, the context where private and professional lives were formed, though with more personal rather than national aspirations.

Lavinia,[8] a middle-aged woman I got to know during my field-trips to Bucharest, was one of those millions. Born in the 1950s, she lived and trained as a professional translator in Bucharest, aspiring to gain safe employment and stability for herself and her family. Married to an officer of the *Securitate*, the Department for State Security, she wanted to become a Party member in the 1980s since this would have given her better career prospects. Not that she attached much importance to politics. The Party was more a means to personal success and realization than a passion. Her father was not happy when informed of his daughter's decision to join the Party. He and his own father, Lavinia's grandfather, had been members of the anti-communist resistance in the Făgăraş Mountains in the late 1940s. The grandfather was an Orthodox priest, her father a medical doctor. Both believed that communism was a Soviet ideology, a means by which Russia had finally succeeded in enslaving Romania. In the end she decided not to join the Party since, for her father and grandfather, its ideology was anti-Christian, anti-national, and anti-Romanian. But for the new generations, it was just the new Romania. If any actions could be taken to "change the world", those were implemented inside the system, not outside. Unlike compromise, open resistance was not an option, since that would mean losing all the possibilities, advantages, and benefits the Party would have

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[7] Paul Miclau, *Le Roumains déracinés. La vie quotidienne dans la Roumanie de Nicolas Ceaucescu* (Paris: Published, 1995).
[8] The name is invented.

provided. The "scientific food rationing" promoted by the regime in the early 1980s[9] left few other choices for personal well-being.

People like Lavinia were also present in the Party History Institute, under the direction of Ion Popescu-Puțuri. Ion Bulei was enrolled at the Institute in 1971 as a doctoral student. Introduced to the Institute by the scientific secretary Titu Georgescu, he built his professional scholarly career writing on contemporary Romanian history. As researcher at the Institute, he 'jumped from [writing] one book to [writing] another'.[10] He told me he was never put under pressure when performing his work, but followed the advice his father had given him as a young student: 'at school you must repeat [history] as they tell you. But you must keep only this truth that is written here', referring to the books his uncle had left him. He was the first member of his family to join the Party, which he did in 1967 when studying international relations at the university. He wrote many books and enjoyed working at the Institute, since he received a salary for writing on subjects he was interested in. Since he was able to write at some speed, he could deliver both his own works and also the articles required from him by Mircea Muşat and Ion Ardeleanu, two propagandists who blackmailed other scholars to write for them, under the threat of otherwise refusing to publish their writings. Despite his Party membership, he told me he was not a convinced Marxist, having always 'manifested a *penchant pour la droite*'.[11] In his writings from the Ceauşescu era, it is indeed possible to see this penchant together with very superficial references to Marxist-Leninism.[12]

As a contrary example, for Georgeta Tudoran communism was truly an ideal of emancipation. She came to Bucharest from Măcin, a small village in the Tulceă region. She was enrolled in 1954 in the Party History Institute by Mihail Roller, at that time the most powerful ideologue in Romania, and future director of the Institute. She had studied at the "Science and Teaching" training school for teachers of the Party Central Committee.[13]

[9] Vlad Georgescu, *The Romanians: A History (*Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1991), 259–261. See also the interesting perspective of informal practices under shortage conditions in Simina Badica, *Beyond Hunger. Perceptions of and Reactions to Shortages in 1980s Romania*, New European College Yearbook 2007.
[10] Interview by the author with Ion Bulei, Bucharest, 12th February 2013.
[11] Ibidem.
[12] See, e.g., Ion Bulei, *1916 – Zile de vară* (Bucharest: Eminescu, 1978). Idem, *Arcul aşteptării. 1914.1915.1916* (Bucharest: Eminescu, 1981); Idem, *Lumea românească la 1900* (Bucharest: Eminescu, 1984).
[13] Arhivele Naţionale Istorice Centrale [ANIC], Comitetul Central al Partidul Comunist Român [CC al PCR], Secţia Cadre, T/160, "Tudoran (Breazu) Georgeta", ff. 4–5.

She remembers Roller as her mentor, and asked me to refrain from writing 'bad things' about him, since 'he never falsified history'.[14] In her apartment in the centre of Bucharest, she has amassed dozens of her own oil on canvas paintings. Painting was her real passion and she would have liked to become a professional artist, but Roller offered her the possibility to become a historian due to her good school results. From 1954 until 1989 she was a Party historian, specialising in the history of socialism before the First World War. From the misery of the countryside she moved to central Bucharest. From her windows, the turrets of the gigantic Romanian parliament built by Nicolae Ceaușescu are visible. Thinking about the regime's demolition of a great part of central Bucharest (and Romanian) cultural heritage during the 1980s, I asked her if communism had really been very beneficial. 'Do you know', she asked me, 'what was here on the Dâmbovița River? Shore, grass, dogs, cats. They [the Party] have made everything beautiful. People working, from dawn until evening. There were some small wretched houses and apartment blocs were built instead'.[15]

To interpret communism as a despotic power put to an end in 1989 by a glorious revolution is to give a teleological explanation of the phenomenon, since it would depict communism as a façade that magically resisted for 45 years with nobody actually supporting it. On the other hand, most of the everyday life under the communist regime has been considered as the near, unproblematic past, to be blamed and condemned, or forgotten for the sake of quiet life. The condemnation of communism had as a consequence a certain bias: it reduced the possibility of many ordinary Romanians to understand its importance. For many, communism had been seen as an emancipatory force: an emancipation that came only and uniquely with their submission to the Party.

People of different origins, different ideals, and defined by different actions, like Ion Popescu-Puțuri, Ion Bulei, and Georgeta Tudoran, that is people who were, to different degrees, faithful to communist ideology but involved in the same environment of history-writing, contributed with their own actions to redefining the historiographical canon the regime was using. They worked within the same institution, which was a complex mixture of scholars and activists, where propaganda and research cohabited, and where the tensions between the Party needs, and the struggle for power, recog-

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[14] Interview by the author with Georgeta Tudoran, Bucharest, 16 March 2013.
[15] Ibidem.

nition, and resources between individuals, networks, and groups deter-
mined the development of the regime's historiography.

PART ONE
Definition of the Problem

Theory, research questions, and methods

1.1 Aims

This book is dedicated to an analysis of the Party History Institute of the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party as a place of inter-action between historians, propagandists, and Party politicians striving to define the historiographical canon. The Institute is analysed as an empirical case, and a very relevant one, for defining the relationship between politics and historiography under the communist dictatorships of the Cold War era. This book is the history of a field of tensions between different sets of actors that expressed a plurality of values and exigencies, and is thus the history of the negotiation for resources, for individual and group legitimacy, and for symbolical and professional recognition. One of the aims of my work is to scrutinize the co-partnership of historians, propagandists, Party politicians and veterans in this complex field of tension, moving beyond presenting a simplistic dichotomy between power and scholarship. It would perhaps be, for the purposes of the present study, comfortable and convenient to analyse power as a monolith, as the totalitarian paradigm suggests, since the alternative would be to write a history of the resistance to this power. That is probably why the Party History Institute has never received proper scholarly attention. It was considered to be merely a Party organization, close to the leadership, and therefore its function was considered clear and unproblematic. But this vision precluded the recognition of the complexity of the relationship between political power and historiography, and par-ticularly of the vicissitudes that occurred in the institution for historical research most closely linked to the authority. In this story, power is *in* historical research. Historians and propagandists contributed actively to re-define and mediate the historical narratives and the cultural propaganda of the regime. Their vicissitudes at the Party History Institute actually had not

much to do with "the good of the Party"; rather, the work-related conflicts were often driven by personal and group interests. Therefore, the focus of this study concerns the process of history-writing performed between organizational goals and conflicting networks, in order to understand the historiography produced.

1.2 History-writing between political canon and professional standard

Political power and scholarship are, using Mitchell G. Ash's terminology, in a symbiotic relationship of mutual advantage. Ash considered the relationship between political power and scholarship as dynamic, symbiotic, and mutually beneficial,[1] not as abusive but as deliberative:[2] power and scholarship, in Ash's theory, are resources for each other.[3] The mobilisation of history-writing, since the rise of the nation state in a search for legitimation, cannot be merely considered as a state-conducted action: this would negate any agency of the scholars and negate the autonomy of knowledge within modern universities.[4] Scientists/scholars and political power serve, according to Ash, as intellectual, political, rhetorical, and financial resources for each other.[5] Therefore, historiography is one of the products of this position of mutual advantage between power, which seeks legitimation, and scholarship, which seeks resources and work positions.

Nevertheless, although empirical evidence shows that political power, attempting to legitimize itself, prefer scholars to have *auctoritas*, deliverers of a socially recognized *knowledge*,[6] other empirical evidence confirms that

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[1] Sheila Faith Weiss. *The Nazi Symbiosis: Human Genetics and Politics in the Third Reich* (Chicago, London: The University of Chicago Press, 2010), 10.

[2] Marco Nase, *Academics and Politics. Northern European Area Studies at Greifswald 1917–1991*, Doctoral dissertation (Huddinge: Södertörn University, 2016), chapter I.2.

[3] Johannes Feichtinger. "Staatsnation', 'Kulturnation', 'Nationalstaat': The Role of National Politics in the Advancement of Science and Scholarship in Austria from 1848 to 1938', in *The Nationalization of Scientific Knowledge in the Habsburg Empire, 1848–1918*, ed. Mitchell G. Ash, Jan Surman (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 61.

[4] Richard H. Beyler, 'Boundaries and Authority in the Physics Community in the Third Reich', in *The German Physical Society in the Third Reich: physicists between autonomy and accommodation*, ed. Dieter Hoffman, Mark Walker (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 28.

[5] Weiss. The Nazi Symbiosis, 10.

[6] These two terms, *potestas* and *auctoritas*, used in Roman civil law during the monarchic period (753509 B.C.), described the functions of the public representatives.

political power can reveal itself to have a mere *potestas*, the manifestation of a socially recognized *power*, and can mimic historical inquiries by propaganda.[7] Therefore, visualizing scholarship and political power as resources for each other is useful in order to understand the tension between two distinctive entities, but the picture is incomplete. The standard by which history and propaganda are produced can contribute to distinguishing them, since it is apparently less normative than those of other scholarly and scientific disciplinary fields. The principles of hierarchization of scholarship[8] cannot tell much about this distinction, since the mechanisms of the field[9] of history discipline are open to mimicry as well. Therefore, it is very easy for political power to fabricate propagandists as scholars and make them fabricate propaganda as history-writing. In the dictatorship of the twentieth century, those propagandists, as historians, had an effective agency in redefining scholarly standards and in validating the meta-narrative canon desired by political power.

Therefore, the agency of power in the field cannot be dismissed so easily. As I will show in the next pages, the relationships between political power, in a search for legitimacy and in need of control, and history-writing, and between autonomy and heteronomy, far from being fixed, are the product

The Senate had *auctoritas*, while the magistrates had *potestas*; the latter exercised it through *imperium*; Carl Schmitt, *Constitutional Theory* (Durham, London: Duke University Press, 2008), 458–459, n1.

[7] The Latin term *propaganda* (narrative, knowledge) lacks in its meaning precisely the connotation of *inquiry*, which *historia* has (narrative, knowledge, inquiry). History-writing that *searches* for historical objectivity is qualitatively different from history-writing that *propagates* a historical objectivity.

[8] Two different principles of hierarchization of scholarship: the heteronomous principle, which is success (power and resources), and the autonomous principle, namely recognition by the scholarly community on the basis of a cultural capital acquired by the mastering of the discipline's standard, which is the guarantee of scientific/scholarly autonomy towards the rest of the world, including towards political power: 'The university field is organized according to two antagonistic principles of hierarchization: the social hierarchy, corresponding to the capital inherited and the social and political capital actually held, is in opposition to the specific, properly cultural hierarchy, corresponding to the capital of scientific authority or intellectual renown'; Pierre Bourdieu. *Homo Academicus* (Stanford: Stanford University Press: 1988), 48. See also: Pierre Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production: Essays on Art and Literature* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1993), 38–39. Mathieu Hilgers, Eric Mangez (eds.), *Bourdieu's Theory of Social Fields: Concepts and Applications* (London-New York: Routledge, 2015), 184.

[9] A field is defined by Pierre Bourdieu as a space of interaction between actors with specific practices, logics, and laws, where actors occupy positions and struggle to conserve or to transform these positions; Pierre Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production. Essays on Art and Literature* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 40–41.

of historical processes which determine their switches and turns. Looking at the long-term history of Western civilization, this relationship is the product of a major leap, the rise of modernity. From it, many dynamics related to the autonomous narrative of the past and the quest for legitimation by the sovereign power originated. These dynamics, which will be explained in the next pages, will identify concepts which constituted the analytical tools for my analysis of a propaganda institution that was aimed at producing historical writings.

As *reductio ad minimum*, Antonio Gramsci's definition of history[10] works as a potential theoretical framework for understanding what history is – politics – but it needs to be explained. In Aristotelian terms, politics is the examination of how the *pólis* (πόλις – the city, the community) works towards the common good. Since human reason differs, ways to look at the world differ as well[11]; therefore man is a political animal who fights (from the Greek πόλεμος, conflict, war) for the common good with different ideas. For example, the works by Herodotus and Thucydides portray a notable difference in approach, method, and sources used when writing history. While Herodotus tried to avoid reflexivity in his narrative, allowing more points of view to be expressed, Thucydides, one generation later, undermined ontologically the validity of alternative narratives: by his method,[12] *he saw*, therefore he reported history *as it was*,[13] acknowledging the importance of his narrative and his own reflexivity. Neither Herodotus nor Thucydides portrayed themselves as politicians in the modern sense, but politics was embedded in their narrative.

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[10] 'History is always contemporary, that is, politics'; Antonio Gramsci. *Quaderni dal carcere* (Turin: Einaudi, 1975), 1242.

11 James J. Murphy, James Berlin, Robert J. Connors, Sharon Crowley, Richard Leo Enos, Victor J. Vitanza, Susan C. Jarratt, Nan Johnson, Jan Swearingen. 'The Politics of Historiography' *Rhetoric Review* 7 (1/1988), 5.

[12] Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, I, 1: 'Thucydides, an Athenian, *wrote* (ξυνέγραψε) the war of the Peloponnesians and the Athenians as they warred against each other, beginning to write as soon as the war began, *with expectation* (ἐλπίσας) that it should prove a great one and most worthy of the relation of all that had been before it; *conjecturing so much* (τεκμαιρόμενος) both from this, that they flourished on both sides in all manner of provision, and also because *he saw* (ὁρῶν) the rest of Greece siding with the one or the other faction, some then presently and some intending so to do'. Translation by Thomas Hobbes, 1629. Italics added by the author. See also the translations in English by Benjamin Jowett, Oxford, 1881, in French by Jacqueline de Romilly, Paris, 1964, and in Italian by Claudio Moreschini, Milan, 2008.

[13] Gonzalo Pasamar, 'Origins and Forms of the "History of the Present" *History of Historiography* 58 (2010), 87–88.

Politics was embedded in the narratives of different doctrines elaborated by several schools,[14] such as the patristic (100–700 A. D.) and the scholastic (1100–1200)[15] which propagandized the *credo* throughout Europe. Science, in this context, was the knowledge of Aristotelian causes, derived from the comments on physics, metaphysics, logic, and ethics by Aristoteles.[16] What we in the 21st century call historiography,[17] in the Middle Ages was a history of the divine and of its manifestation in the world. Besides this function, a specific form of historiography was also aimed at representing the dramas of the human communities: epics, a form of historiography which contained myths and allegories. Despite the form in which it was written, medieval historiography was often written according to present situations and in response to crisis. Questions of legitimation for political power were central in those writings, and consequently historiographical polemics were present.[18]

Once educated laics began to replace the clerics in their role as intellectual guides in the fifteenth century, the question of state power started to become the centre of attention among French jurists and Italian humanists.[19] Among the latter, Niccolò Machiavelli indicated that the aim of political power was not the Aristotelian common good: the *Prince* always acts in order to maintain his power. *Raison d'État* and political realism were two key elements that pervaded the works of Thucydides and Machiavelli, even if the former pretended to write the truth and the latter addressed more directly the nature and practices of the preservation of political power.

The transition to the modern era, of which Machiavelli has been a precursor, marked the passage from sovereignty to governmentality. The old naturalness that framed medieval political thought was substituted by governmentality, which is the management of what previously was the

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[14] According to De Rijk, no unitary philosophy existed during the Middle Ages; rather, philosophy during this period was conducted by several schools. See Marie-Lambert De Rijk, *La philosophie au moyen âge* (Leiden: Brill, 1985), 15–22.

[15] On Christian propaganda during the Middle Ages, see Esther Cohen, 'The Propaganda of the Saints in the Middle Ages' *Journal of Communication* 31 (4/1981), 16–19.

[16] Graziella Federici Vescovini, Medioevo Magico. La magia tra religione e scienza nei secoli XIII e XIV (Turin: Utet, 2008), XXIV.

[17] Recent literature seems to apply contemporary concepts in the categorization of Middle Age historiography, see Deborah Deliyannis (eds.), *Historiography in the Middle Ages* (Leiden: Brill, 2003).

[18] For a survey of recent interpretations of the relationships between historiography and power in the Middle Ages, see Justin Lake, 'Current Approaches to Medieval Historiography' *History Compass* (13-3/2015), 92–95. Lake underlines the propagandistic function of medieval historiography (95).

[19] Wolfgang Reinhard, *Il pensiero politico moderno* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2000), 9.

property of political power by the will of God. This management marked the rise of the modern state, which refused to part with the direct control previously exercised by the sovereign over his population and resources in order to have them managed according to scientific principles.[20]

The downfall of the united Christian Europe with the Reform was the cause of the preoccupation of many early modern writers, which sacralised, with the instruments of a simplified medieval theology, the state as the ultimate barrier against chaos and disorder, presenting the city/state as synonymous with rational order.[21] Jean Bodin's book *Les Six Livres de la République* (1576) defined the state, guided by the sovereign, as a sacred entity whose order has been given by God with the Ten Commandments, and that guaranteed order and security.[22] The sovereignty of the absolute monarchy, according to Bodin, lay in its "power to make and break the law".[23] The qualitative step that marked the difference between Bodin and Thomas Hobbes' *Leviathan* is the contractual aspect of the participation of the citizens within the state,[24] a trajectory that would be finalized later by Jean-Jacques Rousseau and his conception of a Social Contract. Bodin's work represents well the passage from the medieval unitary Christian Europe to the national particularisms of modernity, constituted of objective, moral and social entities in internal conflict.[25]

In the modern era, the passage from mere obedience of the population to the sovereign to the active responsibility of the population for the public good was marked for the first time. The population was forced into new

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[20] Michel Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population. Lectures at the College de France, 1977–78* (Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 448–449.

[21] Idealization of the modern state, portrayed in different forms and with different arguments in the *Institutio Principis Christiani* by Erasmus from Rotterdam (1515), in *Utopia* by Thomas Moore (1517), in *Les Six Livres de la République* (1576) by Jean Bodin, in *La città del sole* (1602) by Tommaso Campanella and in the *Leviathan* (1651) by Thomas Hobbes. Despite the similarity of *Utopia* with the City of Sun, the role of science as guidance was dismissed by Erasmus and Thomas Moore as quackery. Therefore, the presence of a form of theology in Campanella's work is evident. See Reinhard, cit. 38–39. Reform and Counter-reform have contributed to diminishing the simplification of theology [see Johan Huizinga, *L'autunno del medioevo* (Rome: Newton, 2007), 202], but not to its annihilation, as the utopic City of Sun by the Dominican clerk Campanella shows.

[22] John Bossy, *L'Occidente Cristiano 1400–1700* (Turin: Einaudi, 2001), 183–184.

[23] Jean Bodin, *Les Six Livres de la République, I, X* (1576), 223, quoted in Simone Goyard-Fabre, *L'Etat: figure moderne de la politique* (Paris: Colin, 1999), 1754.

[24] S. Goyard-Fabre, *L'Etat*, 1754–55.

[25] Ibid., 200.

mechanisms of disciplined discourse and invited to take an active part in this discourse. The scientific principles of control were forms of knowledge intended to be rational and standardised in procedures which could be replicated and performed without the constant control of the prince. At the same time, the scientific principles exercised a more subtle and more omnipresent form of control, which was, by disciplinary power, directly embedded in the physical and political bodies of the population,[26] which was active participant in the discourse of modernity.[27] A modern, efficient bureaucracy, composed of bourgeois and nobles,[28] gained unprecedented agency from this transformation.[29] The objectivity required by this new form of government had nothing to do with mere calculation of force that could be exercised by the state: instead, it had proper rules and methods.

Therefore, knowledge was empowered[30] by this condition of outsourcing,[31] as were scientists and scholars. Beside the armies, the hospitals, and the prisons as modern institutions, also modern scholarship and its

[26] 'Many disciplinary methods had long been in existence – in monasteries, armies, workshops. But in the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the disciplines became general formulas of domination. [...] Discipline increases the forces of the body (in economic terms of utility) and diminishes these same forces (in political terms of obedience)'; M. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish. The Birth of the Prison* (New York: Vintage, 1991), 137–138. Disciplinary power together with bio-power formed the discursive practice, or a body of knowledge of what is socially acceptable in a determined society. See Michel Foucault, 'La fonction politique de l'intellectuel', in *Dits et écrits II, 1976–1988*, edited by D. Defert and F. Ewald, 109–114 (Paris: Gallimard, 2001). For biopower, see Michel Foucault. Society Must Be Defended: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975–1976. (New York, NY: St. Martin's Press. 1997), 242.

[27] In Aristotle's thought, the *pólis* was a political community from which the natural life (*zōḗ* - ζωή) was excluded and confined to the private sphere (*oíkos* – οἶκος); due to the exclusive nature of the *polis*, Agamben considers that modernity resembled more the Roman *civitas*, whose citizenship was inclusive and extensible; see Giorgio Agamben. *Homo Sacer. Il potere sovrano e la nuda vita* (Torino: Einaudi, 1995), 4.

[28] This process was carried on at the expense of nobility. Jean-Pierre Labatut, *Le nobiltà europee dal XV al XVIII secolo*, (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2002), 205–207.

[29] Science became 'external to the art of government and [...] one may perfectly well found, establish, develop, and prove throughout, even though one is not governing or taking part in this art of government'; Foucault, *Security*, 449.

[30] Foucault, *The History of Sexuality. An Introduction* (London: Penguin, 1990), 93: 'The omnipresence of power: not because it has the privilege of consolidating everything under its invincible unity, but because it is produced from one moment to the next, at every point, or rather in every relation from one point to another. Power is everywhere; not because it embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere'.

[31] Foucault, *Security*, 450: 'two poles appear of a scientificity that, on the one hand, increasingly appeals to its theoretical purity and becomes economics, and, on the other, at the same time claims the right to be taken into consideration by a government that must model its decisions on it'.

institutions are products (and reproducers) of modernity. These measures of standardisation and rationalization were institutionalized also in modern academia.[32] But, at its birth, history discipline was informed more by the concerns of the descendants of the aforementioned apologists of the state, than the means for autonomous scholarly knowledge.[33] Political power created modern instruments of control without renouncing its own sovereignty, but retained only the monopoly of violence in order to preserve the good of the community,[34] and conserved its central role in the new disciplined narrative of the state, emancipated from the totality of Christian Europe and secularized into modern national states conscious of their national goal.[35]

The division of Europe and the loss of Christendom's unity were in fact the main concerns of the founder of modern academia, Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz. The scientific principles that permeated modern research were, according to Leibnitz, means to overcome the barriers that prevented the return to unity, which was considered to be the pre-modern condition of Europe. Acting on this belief, he promoted the rise of academia, a universal language that could overcome the local particularisms, and international cooperation between scientists and scholars.[36] These measures hardly succeeded in reuniting Europe; rather, they succeeded, during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, in organizing scientists and humanists in insti-

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[32] See Porciani, Ilaria, Tollebeek, Jo (eds.). Setting the Standards. Institutions, Networks and Communities of National Historiography (London: Pelgrave MacMillan, 2012).

[33] For example, Locke's philosophy, which advocated the total autonomy of knowledge from religious dogmas, and the pursuit of "Truth" through analytical instruments, constituted a parallel to the metaphysics principle of Leibniz. His ideas became prominent in Britain only in the middle of the eighteenth century [Mark Goldie, *The Reception of Locke's Politics* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 1999), xxii–xxxi] but simultaneously in France, where Locke was read by Montesquieu, Voltaire, and Rousseau [Peter Laslett, introduction to *Two Treatises of Government* by John Locke (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 12–13.

[34] Giorgio Agamben. *Homo Sacer*, 118.

[35] I.e., in the modern era, the Papal monarchy provided the state with a model by which it was possible to incorporate religion into politics and to build the modern territorial churches, a process that Paolo Prodi calls 'secularization of the Church and clericalization of the state'; see Paolo Prodi, *Il sovrano pontefice: un corpo e due anime. La monarchia papale nella prima era moderna* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1982).

[36] Paul Hazard, *La crisi della coscienza europea* (Utet: Turin, 2007), 170–171, 179. In 1698, Leibnitz wrote his *Project for the Facilitation of the Reunion of the Protestants with the Roman-Catholics*, and two years later he persuaded Frederick of Brandenburg to found the Prussian Academy of Science.

tutes, academies, and universities, who developed science and scholarship as never before.[37]

The discipline of history as we know it emerged as *Geschichtswissenschaft* at the University of Göttingen (est. 1737) and was further standardised as an instrument of government[38] at Humboldt University (est. 1810).[39] It was, at that time, the systematic study of an *objective* subject-matter of the past. This pretence of objectivity worked well in pre-liberal, pre-democratic, semi-authoritarian, and bureaucratic Prussia, whose Constitution of 1850 guaranteed that 'science and its teaching shall be free'.[40] Leopold von Ranke, a powerful and influential historian, was a passionate supporter of the project of his nation state, convinced of the progressive realization of "Truth" through history in the state.[41] His descriptive rather than analytical narrative relied entirely on a method of work based primary on sources. Ranke rejected the possibility of creating any general theory of history. History, once again, was *the* past *as it actually happened*.[42] Thucydides, rather than Herodotus, was once again the model.

The new *civitas*, the nation, according to Homi K. Bhabha, is a narration that has a double time-frame provided by modernity: one given by nationalist pedagogy and another given by the everyday performance of the

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[37] 'The universities were not [in the seventeenth century] centres of scientific research. Modern science was born outside the universities, often in contrast to them, and was transformed during the seventeenth century and even more so during the two succeeding centuries, into an organized social activity able to create its own institutions', like the Prussian Academy of Science. Paolo Rossi, *La nascita della scienza moderna in Europa* (Bari: Laterza, 2007), x.

[38] 'The Humboldtian model to which Kant, Schleiermacher, and Fichte contributed, prescribed freedom of teaching and learning, the unity of teaching and research, the unity of science and scholarship, and the primacy of pure science over specialised professional training'; Mitchell G. Ash. 'Bachelor of What, Master of Whom? The Humboldt Myth and Historical Transformation of Higher Education in German-Speaking Europe and the US' *European Journal of Education* 41 (2/2006), 246.

[39] Monika Baár, Historians and Nationalism. East-Central Europe in the Nineteenth Century (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 77.

[40] John Connelly, Michael Gruttner (eds.), *Universities under Dictatorship* (University Park: The Pennsylvania University State University Press, 2005), 3 n10.

[41] Moses I. Finley, *Problemi e metodi di storia antica* (Bari: Laterza, 1998), 75–88.

[42] Georg G. Iggers. 'Key phases in the development of modern Western historiography. A retrospective view' *History of Historiography* (58/2010) 3–18, 4. This "scientific history" is addressed in Chris Lorenz, *Drawing the line: "Scientific" History between Myth-making and Myth-breaking*, in Stefan Berger, Linas Eriksonas & Andrew Mycock (eds.), *Narrating the Nation. Representations in History, Media and the Arts*, Berghahn Books, New York/Oxford, 2008, 35–55; 46.

real nation – and of the scholars who live and write it.[43] The nation state needed the know-how of the scholars who were living its narrative and who were writing national ideology in order to impose the master narrative of the nation state. In the nineteenth century, history became an instrument directed by the universities by which the past of entire communities was now shaped[44] and imagined as unitary with their state – the nation state.[45] The vast economic resources of the state, during the nineteenth century, contributed to the rise of nation state pedagogy, the decline of national ideology in cultural media such as schools and universities, museums, and

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[43] Homi K. Bhabha (ed.), *Nation and Narration* (London: Routledge, 1990), 1–7, 291–322. The acculturation process described by Gellner is therefore only half of the game discussed, lacking the performative aspect of the people as the subject that acts when creating its own identity. For example, Bhabha is conscious that the pedagogy of official multiculturalism in post-colonial India is no more than 'a slightly enlarged version of the nation [which] […] settles down to enjoy its newly inclusive version of national identity'; in David Huddart, *Homi K. Bhabha* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 80. Stefan Berger puts it in a similar way, shifting the focus to national historiography: national historiography is 'a specific form of historical representation that accompanied the formation of the nation state or sought to influence the existing self-definitions of a national consciousness'; in S. Berger, *Narrating the Nation: Historiography and Other Genres*, in Stefan Berger, Linas Eriksonas & Andrew Mycock (eds.), *Narrating the Nation. Representations in History, Media and the Arts*, Berghahn Books, New York/Oxford, 2008, 1–18; 5. This national consciousness Berger was referring to coincided with the mythical, supposedly timeless, materials transmitted orally and through cultural and art products – now re-framed into a state-endorsed project; see Miroslav Hroch, 'Historical belles-lettres as a vehicle of the image of national history', in *National History and Identity, Approaches to the Writing of National History in the North-East Baltic Region Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, edited by Michael Branch (Helsinki: Finnish Literature Society, 1999), 97–110.

[44] 'Each state and nation had its own individuality and each *Volk* its peculiar authenticity. The totality of Christian Europe was made up of such national individualities. Overall, authenticity, longevity, unity, and homogeneity became the hallmarks of Romantic national history-writing. 'Growth' and 'evolution' were its key metaphors, stressing the endurance of national characteristics and the permanence of the *Volk*. Tradition, as represented by history, was juxtaposed to sovereignty as formulated by the French revolutionaries'. Stefan Berger, "The Invention of European National Traditions in European Romanticism", in *The Oxford History of Historical Writing, Vol. IV: 1800–1945*, edited by Stuart Macintyre, Juan Maiguashca, and Attila Pók (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 28.

[45] Benedict Anderson considers nations to be imagined communities made concrete by political and/or state institutions; imagining modern nations became possible when print-capitalism was established in Europe, in a 'half-fortuitous, but explosive, inter-action between a system of production and productive relations (capitalism), a technology of communications (print), and the fatality of human linguistic diversity'. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origins and the Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991), 42–43.

state-supported rites of commemoration and jubilees.[46] Political power favoured the development of the professionalization and standardisation of the history discipline, since politics could continue to keep its grip on scholarship by using financial power. Only a few prestigious and well established scholars[47] could be emancipated from this quest for resources and could maintain autonomy once the sovereign power, at the beginning of the age of extremes, seemed to retract the pact signed in the modern era.

The Italian historian Benedetto Croce was one of these scholars. He discovered, with some surprise, that the spirit he believed was being realized gradually through history and incarnated in the perfect order of the state,[48] could easily be subjugated by sovereign power. In the century of political religions, fascism became the religion that, in the words of Giovanni Gentile and Benito Mussolini, idolized the state as 'an absolute, in front of which individual and groups are relative'.[49] Simplifying Hegel's ideas regarding the state, Gentile provided the totalitarian state with a philosophical justification,[50] rejecting the autonomy of science and scholarship in favour of the cult of the state with the *Manifesto of the Fascist Intellectuals* (1925), which considered the realization of the ideals of *patria* in the state as a historical law, and fascism as its deliverer.[51] Croce responded to these ideas with a counter-manifesto, the *Manifesto of Anti-Fascist Intellectuals*. If the signatories of Gentile's manifesto, wrote Croce, as citizens have the right to become members of a party and serve it, as intellectuals they should contribute to elevate all human beings and parties, not only one Party whose

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[46] According to Ernest Gellner, nationalism is the product of traditional agrarian societies turning industrial. The modern invention of the state needs culture as a substitute for the traditional bounds that had disappeared: citizenship required literacy, which was considered the basis for being part of the community because it offered the possibility to store and centralise culture. The standardisation and homogenization of populations, unified and centralised in a high culture, constitute the situation in which the community identifies with defined and sanctioned cultures. The state assumes a primary importance in creating national culture by means of schools, teaching the official national culture. The history of a nation and of nationalism begin with the birth of the state. Ernest Gellner, *Thought and Change* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1964), 158; Idem, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983), 8, 48.

[47] Scholars with high cultural capital, in Bourdieuian terms. See Pierre Bourdieu, *The Forms of Capital*, in J. Richardson (Ed.) *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1986), 241–258.

[48] Rik Peters. '«Nolite Iudicare». Hayden White between Benedetto Croce and Giovanni Gentile' *History of Historiography* 58 (2010), 21.

[49] Giovanni Gentile, Benito Mussolini. *La dottrina del fascismo*, 1932.

[50] Norberto Bobbio, *Profilo ideologico del '900* (Milan: Garzanti, 1990), 160.

[51] Giovanni Gentile, *Manifesto degli intellettuali fascisti*, 1925.

'new Gospel' was an incoherent and bizarre mixture of calls to authority and demagogy, 'a culture deprived of its preambles' – for this reason, 'it is an error to contaminate politics and literature, politics and science'.[52]

Croce and Gentile could be considered as two extreme points on the line between two different principles of hierarchization: autonomy and hetero-nomy; while in most cases, historians are probably positioned somewhere in-between autonomy and heteronomy. The struggle between these two principles in the field of history discipline is what defines the degree to which the master narrative *canon* requested by political power is accepted when processed through the scholarly *standard* that produces academic knowledge in each historical, political, and disciplinary context.

The rise of the disciplines during modernity marked the externalization of scientific principles from the sovereign power to progressively profes-sionalized organizations for research and education. In fascist Italy, those principles were re-submitted to a new political religion, the cult of the state, which was autarchic and which did not recognize the legitimacy of scholarship. In the dictatorships of twentieth-century Europe, the trend was very similar: scholarship was no longer autonomous, but reordered under the principle of the common good, which was incarnated by the state, the Party, or in the leader. Therefore, being directed by political principles, autonomous scholarship became in those conditions indistinguishable from total heteronomy, its products indistinguishable from propaganda, the competition for power and resources in the field was subordinated to the official rhetoric of the political power.

1.3 History-writing in Eastern Europe during the Cold War

The *Oath to the King and His Dynasty and to the Fascist Regime*,[53] imposed in 1931 on the Italian scholars and scientists, redefined by *imperium* the professional standard of the disciplines. After that, the task of the university professors would have been to 'adhere to all the academic duties with the aim of educating hardworking, honest and devoted citizens to the Home-

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[52] Benedetto Croce, *Manifesto degli intellettuali anti-fascisti*, 1925.
[53] Royal Decree n. 1227, 28th August 1931.

land and to the Fascist Regime'.[54] Furthermore, the Oath also required the professors to adhere to fascism. Only a dozen of them refused to sign the Oath, against thousands that did. Croce suggested many of them sign it, in order to fight fascism from within, preserving the autonomy of scholarship and therefore its prestige.[55] But the signatories of the Oath were committing what the French philosopher Julian Benda has called *The Betrayal of the Intellectuals* (1927) towards their duty. This duty was 'to set up a corporation [academia] whose sole cult is that of justice and of truth'[56] and which is indifferent towards the material interests (and the legal restrictions) that came with nationalism, socialism, and racism. This Oath is indicative of the coercive power of the European and Eurasian dictatorships that have dominated part of the continent in the twentieth century: it is indicative of the pretence of total control.

According to the totalitarianism paradigm elaborated during the Cold War by Carl J. Friedrich and Zbigniew K. Brzezinski, totalitarian states are characterised by six main minimal attributes: the monopoly of power by one Party, one dominant ideology, a secret police, control of mass communications, a monopoly of violence, and a centrally controlled economy.[57] In the totalitarian state, the organization of the state and Party is total and the ideology is omnipresent in public life. The Party controls the state and the media, keeping individuals separate and isolated, in order to forge the new man.[58] According to Juan Linz, the main characteristic that differen-

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[54] Ibidem.

[55] After 1925, anti-fascism was not sanctioned only when they confined in the cultural sphere, an erudite milieu with no political influence. Benedetto Croce was one of the few intellectuals who was allowed to continue his ideas in his journal *La Critica*. See Christopher Seton-Watson, *L'Italia dal liberalismo al fascismo, 1870–1925, vol. II* (Bari: Laterza, 1999), 783. After the fall of fascism, Croce, in a public speech given in Rome and in a letter to Albert Einstein, insisted that fascism did not derive from Italian Risorgimento, considering it instead 'infiltration' by 'foreign concepts' [Emilio Gentile, *La Grande Italia. Il Mito della nazione nel XX secolo* (Bari: Laterza, 2006), 324–325]. By negating the link between Risorgimento and fascism, he conserved his Hegelian philosophical system which informed his liberalism, and was recognized as the "moral conscience of Italian antifascism" by philosopher Norberto Bobbio.

[56] Julian Benda, *The Treason of the Intellectuals* (New York: William Morrow, 1928), 57.

[57] Carl J. Friedrich, Zbigniew K. Brzezinski, *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy*, 2nd edition (Washington: Frederick A. Praeger Publishers, 1965), 22.

[58] See Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1951), 323–326.

tiates a totalitarian regime from an authoritarian one is the presence of a clear ideology.[59]

While the totalitarian paradigm could be considered a minimum denominator of fascist Italy, Nazi Germany and the Communist Soviet Union, there are a number of differences between them. Of the six characteristics indicated, only the exigence of control actually existed in all three systems. Instead, Party and ideology roles were rather different. The National Socialist German Workers' Party and the *Partito Nazionale Fascista* co-existed with a strong polycentric traditional state, and private structures and organizations persisted albeit under control and manipulation.[60] In contrast, the Soviet Union was a state founded by the Bolshevik Party, where no pre-existing organizational structure was allowed. Qualitatively, the difference is evident: the ideological pretences of the state idolatry in Italy and the legal principle of the *Führerprinzip* in Germany indicated the potential goals of National Socialism and fascism. Those goals were never realized in practice: the New Order or the *uomo nuovo* remained pure messages of propaganda. Instead, the goal to retain power, defend the existing elites, and to exercise full control was fulfilled by these principles.[61]

The second element that distinguishes the Soviet Union from Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy is ideology. In Soviet Union, ideology was qualitatively different from the racial principles and state idolatry disseminated in several works and speeches by the Duce, the Führer and their

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[59] Juan J. Linz, 'Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes', *Handbook of Political Science* vol. 3, edited by Fred I. Greenstein and Nelson W. Polsby (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1975), 175–411; thesis repeated in Juan J. Linz, Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe* (Baltimore-London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996).

[60] For Nazi Germany, see the account of the collapse of societal rationality due to the *Fürherprinzip* – a collapse that involved the state, ideology, and the legal system in Franz L. Neumann, *Behemoth: The Structure and Practice of National Socialism* (London: Victor Gollancz Ltd., 1942). According to Adorno, Nazi Germany united 'the utmost technical perfection with complete blindness'; see Theodor W. Adorno, *Minima Moralia*, 33, accessed January 2nd 2015, http://users.clas.ufl.edu/burt/MinimaMoralia _Full.pdf

[61] In a former study on the Italian disabled ex-servicemen association, I showed that the regime imposed its hegemony on all the private associations that could serve its propaganda, while the ones that refused were simply outlawed. See F. Zavatti, *Mutilati ed invalidi di Guerra: una storia politica. Il caso modenese* (Milan: Unicopli, 2011). See also Doug Thompson, *State Control in Fascist Italy: Culture and Conformity*, 1925–1943 (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1991), 8–10.

hierarchs.[62] Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin were considered to be the founding fathers of the ideology called communism. The First World War and the Civil War had a decisive impact on turning the Bolshevik movement into an organization, crystalizing elements of military hierarchy in it, and making Marxism an instrument of discipline. This revolutionary organization was the first power which succeeded in conquering militarily the Russian multicontinental empire, whose Western path towards modernity had been rejected since the nineteenth century in favour of nationalist and Orthodox visions of a specific Russian modernisation.[63] Contrary to what happened in Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany, where the dictatorships conserved all the pre-existing state structures and cultural elements, the Russian Revolution *crushed* the reactionary tsarist system and the nationalist ideas that supported it.

Last but not least, practically all economic resources were attracted towards the public sphere, centralised under the control of the Party. In the Soviet Union and communist Eastern Europe, the state was the only controller of economic resources, while in Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany private property continued to exist, including private foundations, albeit to a limited extent.

Party role, ideology, and the historical development of the Bolshevik movement made the Soviet Union and its further imperialist expansion a case of a dictatorship that was incomparable with Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany. What remains common in the three cases considered by the totalitarian paradigm is the exigence of control: no informal networks were allowed; only clear roles assigned by the Party/state to the individual were recognized – through organizational forms legitimized by the sovereign power. Culture became a medium to propagandize the regime's canon, at the cost of intellectual autonomy and authority.

Part of the theory of Mitchell G. Ash, referred to previously, is grounded on the empirical case of Nazi Germany, and has proved a useful means to pinpoint the rigidity of the totalitarian approach: scholars and scientists had their agency under National Socialism due to the mutual benefits that the regime and the intellectuals could provide to each other. Or, to use Bour-

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[62] On the different ideas of Hitler and his hierarchs, see Albert Speer, *Inside the Third Reich. Memories* (New York: Macmillan, 1970), 120–127.

[63] Mark Bassin, *Imperial Visions. Nationalist Imagination and Geographical Expansion in the Russian Far East, 1840–1865* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 37–42.

dieu's terminology, the field conserved its partial authority, between auto-
nomy and heteronomy.[64]

In the Soviet Union, similar synergies have been identified by previous
literature between scholarship and political power. The Soviet cultural
politics that formed the basis of Stalinist historiography were the product of
the progressive incorporation of the formerly repressed Russian national
cultural elements into the machinery of Party propaganda, a process carried
out in the first 20 years of Stalinism.[65] After a short period of critical
examination of Western "bourgeois" culture in the twenties, the national
turn of Stalinism in the thirties mobilised the intellectuals in order to define
the culture of the Soviet Union from within,[66] imposing Stalin's "socialist
content" on various national forms.[67] The progressive centralisation of the
cultural institutions under the direct control of the Party allowed the re-use
of old national, scholarly, and popular cultures in a Party-driven system
which changed its goals and methods over the years,[68] generating new
agendas and practices among the intellectuals. The export of Soviet culture
after 1945 was, at least in the plans, nothing but the monolithic imposition
of those Soviet values that cultural diplomacy had started to spread at
international level one decade and a half before.[69]

Nevertheless, the East European periphery of the Soviet empire did not
become monolithic as the Soviets hoped and as claimed by the Western
supporters of the totalitarian paradigm elaborated at the beginning of the
Cold War.[70] The notion of a general communist takeover in all East
European countries, establishing uniform dictatorships conforming to the
imperial model, has been revised by both national and micro-level studies
showing different adaptations of the Soviet model to the contexts of the

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[64] Hilgers, Mangez, *Bourdieu's Theory*, 184.

[65] Kan, Alexander. 'Soviet historiography of the West under Stalin's prewar dictatorship',
History of Historiography, 21/1992 (1/2): 45–64.

[66] Michael David-Fox, *Showcasing the Great Experiment: Cultural Diplomacy and
Western Visitors to the Soviet Union, 1921–1941* (Oxford: Oxford University Press,
2011).

[67] Josip Stalin, *The Political Tasks of the University of the Peoples of the East* (1925).

[68] Michael David-Fox, György Péteri, 'Introduction' to Academia in upheaval. *Origins,
Transfers, and Transformation of the Communist Academic Regime in Russia and East
Central Europe* edited by Michael David-Fox, György Péteri (Praeger, 2000), 8.

[69] David-Fox, *Showcasing the Great Experiment*, cit.

[70] Silvio Pons. *The Global Revolution. A History of International-communism. 1917–1991*
(Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), XV. See also M. J. Selverstone. *Constructing the
Monolith: The United States, Great Britain, and International-communism. 1945–1950*
(Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009).

Eastern Europe countries,[71] the reception of the newly established Party institutions, and the adaptation and resistance of pre-existing universities, research centres, and individual researchers.[72]

For this study, a closer look at the existing literature on the relationship between political power and history-writing in Eastern Europe during the Cold War is necessary when identifying the general trend of this relationship. To my understanding, the existing literature on the topic (for the cases of four Warsaw Pact countries – Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Romania) has identified, in the general trend of this relationship, four different phases, all in relation to the Soviet model imposed after the Second World War: uniformity, fracture, rupture, and diversity.

Uniformity (1948–1953) was the phase when Soviet Union imposed, through the communist parties, its hegemony in Eastern Europe. The communist parties implemented a new legal, bureaucratic, economic, and cultural order copied from the Soviet model.[73] The universities and the national academies of sciences, accused of being bastions of the bourgeois and reactionary elites, were purged and placed under Party control.[74] Even

[71] I specify "countries" since "Eastern Europe" has been used since the Enlightenment thinkers of the eighteenth century coined the term in order to indicate the existence of a specific "East European" path towards modernity, distinct from the ones of the "West European" countries, referred to by their names. The label also indicated Russia. See Stefano Bianchini, *Eastern Europe and the Challenges of Modernity, 1800–2000* (New York, London: Routledge, 2015), 1–21; see also Larry Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe. The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), 1–10.

[72] John Connelly, *Captive University. The Sovietization of East German, Czech, and Polish Higher Education* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000). See also Laurie Koloski, 'More Variations Than Theme: The Sovietization of Eastern European Universities', *Minerva*, 42 (2004), 309–314.

[73] Joseph Rothschild & Nancy N. Wingfield, *Return to Diversity. A Political History of East Central Europe Since World War II* (3rd edition) (Oxford-New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 125–146; the implications of Sovietization in Balázs Apor, Péter Apor, E. A. Rees (eds.), *The Sovietization of Eastern Europe. New Perspectives on the Postwar Period* (Washington: New Academia, 2008), 1–27; Vladimir Tismăneanu (ed.), *Stalinism Revisited. The Establishment of Communist Regimes in East-Central Europe* (Budapest-New York: CEU Press, 2009). Specifically on Stalinist university reforms, see Connelly, *Captive University*, cit.

[74] See Connelly, *Captive Universities*; Jan Sadlak, 'The Use and Abuse of the University: Higher Education in Romania', 1860–1990, *Minerva* 29/2 (1991): 207–211; Maria Todorova, 'Bulgaria', *The American Historical Review* 97 (4/1992), 1113–14.

though repression was the preferred mode of control,[75] propaganda was also important: in this period a number of Party schools and propaganda institutions, among them the Party history institutes, were established,[76] alongside the university and academy system,[77] in order to produce propaganda that legitimized Party rule. The Party history institutes exploited the charisma generated by the participation of communists in the Resistance against Nazi Germany – in the cases of Bulgaria,[78] Czechoslovakia,[79] and Hungary.[80] The Party History Institute of the Romanian Communist Party, in this regard, was different: it had to invent its own pro-Soviet history of antifascism and resistance.[81]

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[75] See the discussion on states and modes of control in Katherine Verdery, *National Ideology Under Socialism. Identity and Cultural Politics in Ceaușescu's Romania* (Berkeley-Los Angeles-Oxford: University of California Press, 1991), 83–87.

[76] On the Party schools in the GDR and Romania, see, e.g., Mihai Dinu Gheorghiu, *Intelectualii în cîmpul puterii. Morfologie și traiectorii sociale* (Iași, Polirom: 2007).

[77] A useful resource for the study of the national historians' communities prior to the advent of communism and on the impact of Stalinization on the organization of culture in Eastern Europe is Ilaria Porciani, Lutz Raphael (eds.), *Atlas of European Historiography. The Making of a Profession, 1800–2005* (London: Palgrave Mac Millan, 2010).

[78] On historiography under Stalinism in Bulgaria: Ekaterina Nikova, 'Bulgarian Stalinism Revisited, in Stalinism Revised', ed. Vladimir Tismăneanu, *Stalinism Revisited* (Budapest-New York: CEU Press, 2009), 283–303; Ivan Elenkov and Daniela Koleva, 'Historical Studies in Post-Communist Bulgaria: Between Academic Standards and Political Agendas', in *Narratives Unbound*, ed. S. Antohi, B. Trencsényi, P. Apor (Budapest-New York: CEU Press, 2007), 410–427; Roumen Daskalov, *Debating the Past: Modern Bulgarian History from Stambolov to Zhivkov*, (Budapest-New York: CEU Press, 2011), 26–29, 129–134, 147–149. Yannis Sygkelos, 'The National Discourse of the Bulgarian Communist Party on National Anniversaries and Commemorations (1944–1948)', *Nationalities Papers* 37 (2009): 425–442.

[79] On the historiography of Czechoslovakia under Stalinism: Maciej Górny, 'Past in the Future: National Tradition and Czechoslovak Marxist Historiography', *European Review of History* 10/1 (2003): 103–114; Bradley F. Abrams, *The Struggle for the Soul of the Nation: Czech Culture and the Rise of Communism*, (Lanham, Boulder, New York, Toronto: Oxford Rowman & Littlefield, 2004); information also in Karel Bartosek, 'The State of Historiography', *Journal of Contemporary History* 2/1 (1967): 143–155.

[80] On the historiography of Hungary under Stalinism: Árpád von Klimó, 'The Sovietization of Hungarian Historiography: Failures and Modification in the Early 1950s', in *The Sovietization of Eastern Europe*, ed. Melvyn P. Leffler, Odd Arne Westad (Cambridge: Cambridge Univeristy Press, 2010), 240–245; Péter Apor, *Fabricating Authenticity in Soviet Hungary: The Afterlife of the First Hungarian Soviet Republic in the Age of State Socialism*, (London-New York: Anthem Press, 2014), 27–60.

[81] The bibliography on this topic is extensive: Șerban Papacostea, 'Captive Clio: Romanian Historiography under Communist Rule', *European History Quarterly* 26 (1996): 181–208; Andi Mihalache, *Istorie și pratici discursive în România "democrat-populară"* (Bucharest: Albatros, 2003); Florin Müller, *Politică și istoriografie în România, 1948–1964*, (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Nereamia Napocae, 2003); Stan Stoica, *Istoriografia*

With the death of Stalin, Eastern Europe experienced a phase of *fracture* (1953–1956) of the previous unity under the leadership of the Soviet Union. Bulgaria followed the Soviet Union in a public denunciation of the personality cult, which resulted in the emergence of a new leadership and political repression.[82] Hungarian communism was shaken by both struggles within the elite and major social upheavals, leading to the Hungarian Revolution.[83] The Czechoslovakian leader first claimed that the country had already undergone the de-Stalinization process, but later on effectively proceeded to implement reforms.[84] Romania, once again, was a special case: the leadership kept its power, claiming that Stalinism had been eliminated in the previous years, swearing public obedience to the new course, but impeding any kind of reform on political and economic levels.[85] The Party-endorsed historiographies from this period started to show the disruption of the bloc's uniformity, in some cases representing the divisions of national histories re-emerging in Marxist-Leninist form,[86] with the exception of Ro-

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românească între îperativele ideologice şi rigorile profesionale, 1953–1965, (Bucharest: Meronia, 2012). Grigore Claudiu Moldovan, 'Sovietization of Historiography during Cultural Stalinism. New Perspectives', *Anualul Institutului de Istorie "G. Bariţiu" din Cluj-Napoca* LI (2012): 173–187.

[82] R. Orleoew, 'Bulgaria's Attempted De-Stalinization in April 1956', *Studia Historyczne* 47/2 (2004): 221–222. Ilyiana Marceva, 'Change of the Guard. The Struggle for Power in Bulgaria, 1953–1962', *Études Balkaniques* I (2000), 59–78; part 2, II, 2000, 36–57.

[83] The most updated and complete scholarly literature on this topic are: Csaba Békés, Malcolm Byrne, János M. Rainer (eds.), *The 1956 Hungarian Revolution: a History in Documents* (Budapest: CEU Press, 2002); László Borhi, *Hungary in the Cold War, 1945–1956. Between the United States and the Soviet Union* (Budapest: CEU Press, 2004); Joanna Granville, *The First Domino. International Decision Making during the Hungarian Crisis of 1956* (College Station: A&M University Press, 2004); Charles Gati, *Failed Illusions. Moscow, Washington, Budapest, and the 1956 Hungarian Revolt* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006).

[84] On the Czechoslovakian missed de-Stalinization: Gordon Skilling, *Czechoslovakia's Interrupted Revolution* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976); Laura Cashman, 'Remembering 1948 and 1968. Reflections on Two Pivotal Years in Czech and Slovak History', *Europa-Asia Studies* 60/10 (2008): 1645–58; Muriel Blaive, *Une de-Stalinization 1956* (Bruxelles, Complexe, 2005). On the uncertainty of the Czechoslovakian leaders in response to Khrushchev's speech: Terry Cox (ed.), *Challenging Communism in Eastern Europe: 1956 and its Legacy* (London: Routledge, 2008), ix.

[85] Vladimir Tismăneanu, *Stalinism for All Seasons A Political History of Romanian Communism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003); Georges Haupt, 'La genèse du conflit soviéto-roumain', *Revue francaise de science politique* XVIII/4 (Fall 1968): 669–684.

[86] In Bulgaria, a purge of the "historical front" took place, and national ideology was once again silenced; see R. Daskalov, *The Making of a Nation in the Balkans. Historiography of the Bulgarian Revival* (Budapest-New York: CEU Press, 2011), 13–15, 20, 59, 90–91; Milena Savova-Mahon Borden, *The Politics of Nationalism under Communism in*

mania, which continued to proclaim its loyalty to the Soviet Union, while slowly turning its Party historiography towards a national orientation.[87]

The repression of the Hungarian Revolution signified the *rupture* of the Eastern bloc (1956–1968). The Hungarian regime continued on its path towards popular legitimization and loyalty towards the Soviet Union, purging both dogmatists and deviationists in the cultural field, but allowing a certain relaxation from the beginning of the 1960s, leading to methodological openings in history-writing.[88] In Bulgaria, the national question re-emerged in politics and culture.[89] Czechoslovakia, which had not yet implemented any de-Stalinization process, tried to counter the social dis-

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Bulgaria. Myths, Memories, and Minorities, Doctoral dissertation (University of London, 2001). In Czechoslovakia the Twentieth Congress of the Soviet Union Communist Party did not bring any change in historiography; see Oldrich Tuma, 'Czech Historiography of Contemporary History (1945–1989)', *Historica* 9 (2002), 125–154. In Hungary, 1956 provoked the purge of many historians and the closure of many universities and institutes in consequence of their participation in the Revolution; see B. Trencsényi, P. Apor, 'Fine-Tuning the Polyphonic Past: Hungarian Historical Writing in the 1990s', in *Narratives Unbound*, eds. S. Antohi, B. B. Trencsényi, P. Apor, 1–100; the continuity in the narratives is instead stressed in P. Apor, *Fabricating Authenticity in Soviet Hungary* (New York: Anthem Press, 2014), 22–24.

[87] In Romania, the first steps away from Stalinism towards national-communism were taken in 1955, but were actually realized in historiography only in 1956–7. See, i.e., Cristian Bogdan Iacob, *Stalinism, Historians, and the Nation: History-Production Under Communism in Romania (1955–1966)*, Ph. D. diss. (Budapest: Central European University, 2011). Stan Stoica, *Istoriografia românească între îperativele ideologice şi rigorile profesionale, 1953–1965* (Bucharest: Meronia, 2012), 70–78; Müller considers that Stalinist historiography continued until the end of the 1960s: Müller, *Politică şi istoriografie*, 319.

[88] Andrea Pető, 'Achievements and Contradictions in the Writing and Teaching of Cultural History in Hungary', in *Cultural History in Europe: Institutions – Themes – Perspectives*, ed. Jörg Rogge (Bielefeld: Transcript, 2001), 141–156; György Mahtényi, 'What made the Kádár Era? Two Books on Hungary's Recent Past', *Hungarian Historical Review* 2/3 (2013): 639–691. Gábor Klaniczay, 'Le Goff, the Annales and Medieval Studies in Hungary' in *The Annales School. Critical Assessment*, ed. Stuart Clark (London-New York: Routledge, 1999), 353–354; István Deák, 'Hungary', *The American Historical Review* 97/4 (1992): 1041–1063.

[89] James F. *Brown, Bulgaria under Communist Rule* (London: Pall Mall Press, New York: Praeger Publishers, 1970). The first uncertain return of national ideology in the mid-sixties is described in T. A. Meininger, 'A Troubled Transition: Bulgarian Historiography, 1989–1994' Contemporary European History 5 (1/1996), 103–104; I. Elenkov, D. Koleva, 'Historical Studies in Post-Communist Bulgaria' in *Narratives Unbound*, eds. S. Antohi, B. Trencsényi, P. Apor, 409–412; Roumen Dasklaov portrays the rise of the new national canon (national "Revival") in historiography and literature and the resistance of the old, class-based one in R. Daskalov, *The Making of a Nation*, 19, 24–25, 176, 216.

content created by societal rigidity with a late reform initiative in 1967, measures that were not accepted by the Soviet Union.[90]

The Romanian Workers' Party, once again, was a special case and extreme in its trend, compared to the other parties: having built its national-communism *culturally* since 1956, and still declaring total loyalty to the Soviet Union (i.e., giving fundamental help in crushing the Hungarian Revolution) by 1964 it could spell out *politically* the most open rupture of its subordinate relationship with Soviet Union. The Romanian historiography of the period 1956–1968 was built not only following a national decline of the Soviet historiographical canon, but reusing national narrative elements, and the formerly secluded historians.[91] Politically, the Romanian leadership had achieved an incredible legitimacy, which allowed the regime to swear loyalty no longer to the Soviet Union, but to the values of peace and respect among countries –therefore, opposing openly the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia.

With the end of the Prague Spring, the countries of Eastern Europe started to show their *diversity*. After the Czechoslovakian Normalization, Prague endorsed an extensive purge of the Party, including a majority of the intellectuals.[92] History-writing, which before the Soviet invasion was a field of relative freedom, became divided between supporters of the Prague Spring and its detractors.[93] In Hungary, plurality in historiography was allowed from the seventies, with less rigid restrictions in terms of topics, and in the eighties the Hungarian historians could benefit from the in-

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[90] The state of Czechoslovakian historiography during the 1960s is briefly treated in K. Bartosek, 'The State of Historiography', cit.

[91] Iacob, *Stalinism, Historians, and the Nation*, cit.; Stoica, *Istoriografia românească*, 121–164; Iacob, 'Co-option and control. The Changing Profile of the Historical Front in communist Romania at the End of the Fifties', *History of Communism in Europe* 2 (2011): 197–226. Iacob, 'Avatars of the Romanian Academy and the Historical Front: 1948 versus 1955', in *Stalinism Revisited*, ed. Tismaneanu, 255–281.

[92] Vlad Sobell, 'Czechoslovakia: The Legacy of Normalization', *Eastern European Politics and Societies* 2/1 (1987): 35–68. Kieran Williams, *The Prague Spring and its aftermath. Czechoslovakian politics 1968–1970* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

[93] Michael Kopeček, 'In Search of "National Memory". The Politics of History, Nostalgia and the Historiography of Communism in the Czech Republic and East Central Europe', in *Past in the Making. Historical Revisionism in Central Europe after 1989*, edited by Michael Kopeček (Budapest-New York: CEU Press, 2008), 75–96. See also P. Kolař and M. Kopeček, 'A Difficult Quest for New Paradigms: Czech Historiography after 1989', in *Narratives Unbound*, eds. S. Antohi, B. Trencsenyi, P. Apor, 173–248; and Jiří Kořalka, 'Czechoslovakia', *The American Historical Review* 97 (4/1992), 1029.

fluences of increasingly frequent contact with Western universities.[94] In Bulgaria, where systemic reform did not take place, the regime encouraged a growing nationalism in cultural politics, and particularly in historiography.[95] Romania showed a similar path to Bulgaria but, once again, this was particular and extreme in its delineation. Once the regime had achieved legitimacy in 1968, it reconverted the historical research milieu into a propaganda machine. In 1974, the national-communist historiographical canon became a Party document which allowed the progressive enhancement of the nationalist narrative elements and of the (Stalinist) cult of the leader, of the Party, and of the nation:[96] The conflict that Romanian historians, with the full support of the Party, engaged in with Hungarian historians regarding the history of Transylvania, is a clear example of this trend.[97]

Previous research has left a major empirical gap in the history of the relationship between political power and history-writing in the Eastern European communist regimes. This concerns the network of the Party

[94] On Hungarian historiography in the seventies and eighties, see B. Trencsényi, P. Apor, 'Fine-Tuning the Polyphonic Past', in *Narratives Unbound*, eds. S. Antohi, B. Trencsenyi, P. Apor; István Deák, 'Hungary'.

[95] For Bulgaria, the stagnation of the seventies and the implementation of nationalism since the end of the same decade, see M. Savona-Mahon Borden, *The Politics of Nationalism under Communism in Bulgaria*, 190–196, 280–282; I. Elenkov, D. Koleva, *Historical Studies in Post-Communist Bulgaria*, in S. Antohi, B. Trencsényi, P. Apor, *Narratives Unbound*, 416–ss. Maria Todorova, 'Bulgaria', *The American Historical Review* 97 (4/1992), 1105–1117.

[96] Cristian Vasile, *Viața intelectuală și artistică în primul deceniu al regimului Ceaușescu. 1965–1974* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2015); Vasile, '1968 Romania: Intellectuals and the Failure of Reform, in *Promises of 1968*, ed. Tismăneanu (Budapest-New York: CEU Press, 2011) 241–255. Dragos Petrescu, Cristina Petrescu, 'Mastering vs. Coming to Terms with the Past: A Critical Analysis of Post-Communist Romanian Historiography', in *Narratives Unbound*, eds. Antohi, Trencsényi, Apor, 311–408. Lucian Boia, *History and Myth in Romanian Consciousness* (Budapest-New York: CEU Press, 2001). Alexandru Florin-Platon, 'Fețele lui Ianus: Istoriografia română la sfârșit și începtul de secol', *Anuarul Institutul Cercetări Socio-Umane Gheorghe Șincai al Academiei Române* III–IV (2000–2001): 7–22; Verdery, *National Ideology under Socialism*; Vlad Georgescu, *Istorie și politică. Cazul comuniștilor români, 1944–1977* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1990); Pavel Câmpeanu, *The origins of Stalinism. From Leninist Revolution to Stalinist Society* (New York: Sharpe, 1986). Francesco Zavatti, 'Forma Stalinista, Contenuto Nazionale. Il Nazional-Comunismo Romeno', *Il Ponte* 68 (5–6/2012), 127–144.

[97] On the divergences between Hungarian and Romanian historians, see Anders E. Blomqvist, Constantin Iordachi, Balázs Trencsényi, *Hungary and Romania beyond National Narratives. Comparisons and Entanglement* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2013); see also Blomqvist, 'Competing Stories about Transylvania's Past. National Stories in an International Context?', in *Re-approaching East Central Europe: Old Region, New Institutions?*, ed. *Egle* Rindzeviciute (Huddinge: Södertörns Högskola, 2006), 265–358.

history institutes. After a very short period of popular democracy, half of the European continent was ruled by communist parties loyal to Moscow. The communists built their parties copying the organizational structure of the Soviet Union Communist Party. The organization also included the creation of institutions that resembled the Institute of Marxism-Leninism of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (IML), created in the early 1920s.[98]

Between 1946 and 1951, each Communist Party created such institutions, all having the same range of tasks: ordering and securing the Party archive, translating and publishing Soviet ideological manuals, and publishing the official history of their Communist Party. These institutes, very similar in structure and aims, remained in place for a long time in communist Eastern Europe. They represented the "historical front" of world communism, and fought for a common cause. Yet, their subordination to the Communist Party of their country of belonging made them often clash and compete with each other, but without ever breaking their international relationships, which were dictated by requirements of diplomacy and scholarship.

Once they were dissolved with the end of the dictatorial regimes, their activities, which included conferences, common publications, scholars' exchanges, publications' exchanges, and archival exchanges, were completely forgotten.[99]

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[98] See Maria Ferretti, 'History and Memory', in Silvio Pons, Robert Service (eds.), *A Dictionary of 20th-Century Communism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 381–383. See also Institute of Marxism-Leninism of the Central Committee of the Soviet Union's Communist Party, *The Great Soviet Encyclopedia, 3rd Edition.* (1970–1979). Retrieved on September 9th, 2015 from http://encyclopedia2.thefreedictionary.com/ Institute+of+Marxism-Leninism+of+the+Central+Committee+of+the

[99] Some examples of those institutions were: Institute for the History of the Party of the Central Committee (CC) of the Bulgarian Communist Party (Bulgaria), briefly described in Daskalov, *Debating the Past*, 327–328. The Department for Party History (Wydział Historii Partii) of the Agitation and Propaganda Section of the CC of the Polish United Workers' Party (Poland), formed from the short-lived Department of Party History (Zakład Historii Partii, 1946–1957) and existing until 1971, has received peripheral attention in narratives on historiography in communist Poland: Barbara Jakubowska, 'Wydział Historii, Partii KC PZPR – krytyka, samokrytyka i autokrytyka', in Jerzego Maternickiego, Marioli Hoszowskiej, Pawła Sierżęgi (eds.), *Historia. Społeczeństwo. Wychowanie*, Rzeszów 2003, 211–219; Tadeusz Rutkowski, *Nauki historyczne w Polsce 1944–1970. Zagadnienia polityczne i organizacyjne* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego 2007), 74–81, 331–335. Tadeusz Rutkowski, *Rola Wydziału Historii Partii KC PPR/PZPR w kształtowaniu polityki historycznej w Polsce (1946–1956)* in S. Nowinowski, J. Pomorski, R. Stobiecki (eds.), *Pamięć i polityka historyczna*, Łódź

Apparently, those institutes were pure organizations for propaganda. But the empirical evidence that many professional historians were employed in these institutes contradicts this picture, and raises many questions related to the relationship between power and history-writing, to autonomy and heteronomy, to the general goals of the organizations vs. the individual and networks' power struggles, to the tension between Party canon and historiographical standards.

1.4 Choice of the case study: Romania

The relationship between power and history-writing in action through the international contacts between this network of institutions will not be established until present research clarifies what actual agency those institutes had, and what relationship they had with their Party of reference. I have

2008, 357–371. Tadeusz Rutkowski, *Tworzenie zrębów mitu. działalność Wydziału Historii Partii Komitetu Centralnego Polskiej Partii Robotniczej na polu propagandy dziejów ruchu robotniczego* in M. Krzysztofiński, *Polska Partia Robotnicza 1944–1948. Studia i szkice*, Rzeszów, 2014, 262–273. Tomasz Siewierski, *Komuniści i historycy. Polski ruch robotniczy w badaniach uczonych w PRL – wybrane aspekty* in Dariusza Magiera (ed.) *Partia komunistyczna w Polsce. Struktury – ludzie – dokumentacja*, Lublin – Radzyń Podlaski 2012, 463–479. Paweł Korzec, 'Materiały do studiów nad historiografią Polski Ludowej (w zakresie historii najnowszej)', *Zeszyty Historyczne*, 20/1971, 43–58. On the Department of Party History, see Tadeusz Rutkowski, *Nauki historyczne*, cit.; Tomasz Siewierski, *Specyfika badań nad tzw. ruchem robotniczym w historiografii PRL. Zarys problemu* in Kamila Dworaczka, Łukasza Kamińskiego (eds.), *Letnia Szkoła historii najnowszej,* 6, 2013, 177–183. Jan Sobczak, *Warszawski epizod w życiu profesora Antoniego Czubińskiego. Z kart dziennika 1971–1974*, Poznań, 2005, 9–12. On the Institute of Marxism-Leninism of the CC of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany there is one monograph edited by the Institute in its last year of existence and some pages: Institut für Marxismus-Leninismus beim ZK der SED, *Vierzig Jahre Institut für Marxismus-Leninismus beim ZK der SED,* Berlin o. J., 1989; Ulrich Neuhäusser-Wespy, *Die SED und die Historie*, Bouvier, 1996, 75–96. The Institute for the History of the Party of the CC of the Hungarian Working People's [/Socialist Workers] Party (Hungary) (*Politikatörténeti Intézet*) have received attention only in self-reflexive narratives promoted by the communist Party: Henrik Vass (ed.), *Studies on the history of the Hungarian working-class movement: 1867–1966* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1976); Vass Henrik (ed.), *Munkástörténeti lexicon* (Budapest: Kossuth Kiadó, 1976); Dezső Nemes, Henrik Vass, *The Hungarian Republic of Councils: 60th anniversary of the Revolution* (New Delhi: Hungarian Information and Cultural Centre, 1979). The Institute of the History of the CPCz, renamed in 1969 as the Institute for the History of Socialism (Czechoslovakia) has received no attention, as well as the Institute for Marxist-Leninist Studies of the CC of the Albanian Communist Party (Albania): all of them rich in their production, but poor on their own history.

chosen to analyse the Romanian case, the Party History Institute of the Central Committee of the Romanian Workers' Party / Institute for Historical and Socio-Political Studies of the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party (from here on, indicated as "Institute", "Party History Institute", or "ISISP"),[100] which was the Romanian member of the network of Party History Institutes. But why Romania?

There are two main reasons for the choice of this case study, both dictated by the peculiarities of Romanian history and culture during the twentieth century. The first reason is given by the trend of Romanian politics during the Cold War and its fallout on history-writing, traced in the previous section – Romania appears to be a country where the phases of uniformity, fracture, rupture and diversity from the Soviet political and cultural model are better described by the use of those concepts. Since trying to observe the tensions existing in a Party History Institute could be very problematic because of the absence of secondary literature, a case study on Romania, where the characteristic traits of a process common to the entire Eastern Europe are heightened, enhanced, and somehow made extreme by the exigencies of control over scholarship in history-writing which persisted from the foundation of the regime in 1948 until its fall in 1989, despite several changes in the regime's tactics.[101]

A second good reason is given by the Romanian Communist Party's perennial quest for legitimacy, which it has never had. In Romania, national ideology had a strong *auctoritas*, carried out by the intellectuals, while the communists had a mere *potestas*, exercised by the despotic *imperium* of their Soviet-style version of Marxism-Leninism. In order to understand why national ideology was legitimate and why communism was not, a short excursus on the Romanian cultural history and on the history of Romanian interwar communism is necessary at this point.

During the 19th and first half of the 20th century, the political project *par excellence* inherent in historiography was national ideology. Scholarly research underlines that the years between 1866 and 1914 were crucial for the construction of contemporary Romanian culture. Poets, historians,

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[100] The Institute's name was changed in 1966 to the "Institute for Historical and Socio-Political Studies of the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party". The Romanian Communist Party existed from 1921 and was renamed the Romanian Workers' Party after its fusion with the Social-Democratic Party in 1948, to become again the Romanian Communist Party in 1965. Keith Hitchins, *A Concise History of Romania* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 275.
[101] See Chapter 2.

dramatists and musicians codified popular culture (poetry, traditions and popular beliefs) in a national discourse, denying the elitist roots of the pre-unitary national discourse and anchoring their work in a *deep* and *rediscovered* past.[102] At the same time, the Romanian state monopolized the field of instruction, making primary education free and mandatory by law in 1864; this contributed to the development of an urban bourgeoisie and to the development of literacy among the rural population.[103] Despite internal disagreements, Romanian intellectuals built their idea of nation in opposition to the traditional enemies of Romanian national unity, Russia and Hungary.[104] At the end of the century, it was evident that cultural canons had changed: part of the national ideology had become anti-liberal, combining social protectionism with nationalist and populist rhetoric; furthermore, the intellectuals abandoned the rebel and romantic strains and embraced a pro-state position.[105]

The "critical school" of historians, Dimitrie Onciul, Ioan Bogdan, and Nicolae Iorga, aimed at building a national history based solely on archival documents and their interpretation – a history from below that did not believe in grand narratives, and that was fed by the illusion of the possibility to write a perfectly scientific history.[106] But historiography continued to be considered a weapon to assert a national-political agenda and to elaborate and spread the *topoi* of national history.[107] During the First World War and the interwar period, history became radical, while the national common good became the main aim of Romanian scholars: the renowned archaeologist Vasile Pârvan defined the 'supreme duty' of the Romanian academic community as 'the spiritualization of the life of the great socio-political and culture-creating organism that is the nation'.[108]

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[102] Boia, *History and Myth*, 40.
[103] Treptov, 300, 307.
[104] Umut Korkut, 'Nationalism versus Internationalism: The Roles of Political and Cultural Elites in Interwar and communist Romania', in *Nationalities Papers*, 34 (2/2006), 132–133.
[105] Balázs Trencsényi, "The "Münchausenian Moment": Modernity, Liberalism and Nationalism in the Thought of Ştefan Zeletin", in B. Trencsényi, Constantin Iordachi et al. (eds.), *Nation-Building and Contested Identities: Romanian and Hungarian Case Studies* (Budapest: Regio Books, 2001), 63.
[106] Lucian Boia, *Evoluția istoriografiei române* (Bucharest: Faculty of History University of Bucharest, 1976), 147–164; 180–214;
[107] K. Treptov, quoted, 309–310.
[108] Vasile Pârvan, *Datoria vieții noastre*, Cluj-Napoca, 1919.

As a winner in the First World War, Romania obtained Transylvania, Bessarabia and Bukovina, and the cultural politics previously confined to Wallachia and Moldavia, or supported by irredentist groups in the previously foreign-dominated territories, were extended to the entire national territory. The common good started to be perceived by scientists in terms of eugenics. In 1926, Iuliu Moldovan, a doctor influenced by hygienism and eugenics, published *Biopolitica* (*Biopolitic*), where he advocated a eugenic state based on biological principles.[109] Basically, biological and racial concepts seemed to validate religious discrimination, xenophobia, and anti-Semitism. Anti-Semitism was a common characteristic of the nineteenth century intellectuals, something Corneliu Zelea Codreanu, founder of the Iron Guard, could refer to as support for his very negative views on Jews.[110]

The commitment of scholars towards the salvation of the Romanian nation during the interwar period led to many different cultural currents. *Poporanism*,[111] *paşoptişti* (48-ers),[112] and conservative and traditionalist intellectuals inspired by Orthodox faith,[113] were all aimed at defining and defending their separate notions of the nationally specificity (*specificul national*). These versions of national ideology were reflected also in the historiographical field. The state sponsored the creation of research institutes at the universities, regional branches of the state archives, and museums.[114] The main historiographical debate was between Nicolae Iorga, founder and director, among other functions, of the *Historical Review* (*Revista Istorică* – 1915), and the *Romanian Historical Review* (*Revista*

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[109] Marius Turda, 'The Nation as Object: Race, Blood, and Biopolitics in Interwar Romania', *Slavic Review* 66, (3/2007), 413.

[110] Corneliu Z. Codreanu, *Guardia di Ferro* (Padua: Edizioni di Ar, 1972), 130–140.

[111] For an analysis of *poporanism*, see Daniel Chirot, Charles Ragin, 'The market, tradition and peasant rebellion: The Case of Romania in 1907', *American Sociological Review*, 40, (4/1975); 442–443; Zigu Ornea, *The Romanian Extreme Right. The Nineteen Thirties* (New York: Boulder, 1999), 7–8. See also Constantin Dobrogheanu-Gherea, *Neoiobăgia – Studiu economico-sociologic al problemi nostre agrare*, (1910) reprinted in *Opere complete*, Vol. IV (Bucharest: Editura Politica, 1977). The same analysis, on a more general context, is presented in Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and nationalism since 1780: programme, myth, reality*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 155–158.

[112] Trencsényi, "The "Münchausenian Moment", 63. See also Zigu Ornea, 9–11.

[113] On this variegated group of intellectuals gathered around the journal *Gândirea* (*The Thought*), see Z. Ornea, cit. On the Iron Guard support by the intellectuals, see Alexandra Laignel-Lavastine, *Il fascismo rimosso: Cioran, Eliade, Ionesco* (Turin: UTET, 2008) [original ed.: *Cioran, Eliade, Ionesco: l'oubli du fascisme*, Presses Universitaires de France, Paris, 2002].

[114] Bogdan Murgescu, *Romania*, in Ilaria Porciani, Lutz Raphael (eds.), *Atlas of European Historiography* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 99.

Istorică Română – 1931) founded by Constantin C. Giurescu and Gheorghe Brătianu. Together with P. P. Panaitescu they criticized Iorga's historiography as speculative and politicized – criticizing implicitly Iorga's political vision, while *Revista Istorică Română* supported more openly King Carol the Second.[115]

Many intellectuals in the 1920–30s were committed to finding a possible destiny, a possibility of salvation for post-war Romania. Philosophers, sociologists, and historians identified the fears and expectations of the Romanian population in that time of change, and included them in a new synthesis that, once again, had at its core the idea of the nation.

As the reader has surely noted, no reference has been made to Marxism-Leninism. This is due to the fact that Marxism-Leninism was a very marginal discourse in 19th century and interwar Romania.[116] The Romanian Communist Party (from here on "RCP", or "Party") was founded in 1921 as a section of the Communist International. Due to that affiliation, many members left the RCP and organized the Social-Democrat Party, envisaging the Soviet Union as the new incarnation of the old historical enemy of Romania, Russia. In 1924, the Party was outlawed, and it had to operate clandestinely, weakened by struggles among its factions which continued until 1931 with the total submission to the Comintern. Beyond the quest for power, the main struggles were ideological: some of its members did not accept the definition of Romania as an imperialist creation. A second contended issue was the target of the Party: workers constituted only ten per cent of the population, and most of them were organized in unions close to the Social-Democrat Party. Party influence among the peasants was also very limited, since the peasants supported the National-Peasant Party. The rise of fascism across Europe caused the national question to reappear, albeit envisaged by the Soviet Union.[117]

Since many individuals from the national minorities had leading positions within the RCP, motions inspired directly by the Comintern were promoted, like the 1924 idea of peoples' self-determination, which was the Soviet grand strategy to make the Romanians accept the idea of a Bess-

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[115] Lucian Boia, *Istorie şi mit*, 101–106; Lucian Nastasă, *"Suveranii" universităţilor româneşti. Mecanisme de selecţie şi promovare a elitei intelectuale. Vol. I Profesorii Facultăţilor de Filosofie şi Litere (1864–1948)* (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Limes, 2007), 325–326.
[116] King, *A History of the Romanian Communist Party*, 15.
[117] Andrea Panaccione, *Socialisti europei. Tra guerre, fascismi e altre catastrofi (1912–1946)* (Milan: Franco Angeli, 2000), 182–183.

arabian secession and annexation to the Soviet Union. According to the thesis of peoples' self-determination, the enemy was not the Romanian nation, but the Romanian bourgeoisie who carried out discriminating policies against the national minorities. Even if the Party leaders tried to soften the rudeness of some slogans which disregarded Romanian national ideology, by doing so they prevented any possible popularity of the Party among the elite and the general population.[118]

During the war, the RCP denounced the Second Vienna Award, a territorial decision taken by Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy which reassigned Transylvania to Hungary, and exhorted antifascist parties to support the Soviet Union as the only power able to take back Transylvania for the Romanian people. However, the RCP was still defending the Soviet occupation of Bessarabia. In the end, the main internal struggle during the war was not focused on political or ideological matters, but on the quest for power in view of an eventual takeover.[119] The main protagonists of this struggle were Gheorghiu-Dej, leader of the faction that remained in Romania, facing the pressure of illegality, and Ana Pauker and Luca Vasile, remembered as the 'Muscovites', who had migrated to the Soviet Union.

There was also a third faction, whose most prestigious character was Lucrețiu Pătrășcanu, one of the few intellectuals within the Party. Pătrășcanu developed an autonomous political line, indifferent to the Party's directives, which emphasised the national element. After the fall of Antonescu's dictatorship, he moved in the opposite direction, disrespecting the conciliatory politics of communist prime minister Petru Groza. Pătrășcanu declared in various articles and speeches the need for Transylvanian Hungarians to accept the idea of a unitary Romanian state, with its culture and national symbols.[120] This political strategy attracted many intellectuals, who supported his rise to power. But the national ideology supported by him found no real application, and the struggle among factions led to his arrest in 1948 and his execution in 1954. He was later rehabilitated during the Ceaușescu regime, as a "real" national-communist.

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[118] Ibid., 31.
[119] Dennis Deletant, *Communist Terror in Romania: Gheorghiu-Dej and the State Police, 1948–1965* (London: Hurst & Co., 1999), 146–148, 157 n26, 161–163. See also Tismăneanu, *Stalinism for all Seasons*, 111–123; and King, 36.
[120] Deletant, *Communist Terror in Romania*, 150–158.

Therefore, the second reason for the selection of the case study is the coexistence, in Romania interwar history, of a strong, legitimate national ideology, and of a Communist Party whose history was all but pro-Romanian.

After the Second World War, once the Party had gained total sovereignty, these vicissitudes had a strong impact during the following decades on the history-writing milieu. After 1948, the professional historians were purged or put under strict control. Their positions were taken by the new elite of Party graduate propagandists, and a number of uneducated veterans who compensated for their lack of skills with their political curricula. At that time, the exigence of the Party was to establish a pro-Soviet narrative at national level. This goal was reached by cutting the resources of the state research institutions and enhancing the Party cultural organizations' role. In 1956, the political conditions required the Party to increase its legitimacy. The historians were given back their autonomy and authority. Their institutions obtained the task to restore the national canon, which clearly distinguished between a "good" nation and its enemies. In their work, the historians had to coexist with veterans and propagandists who tried to turn the inglorious history of the pro-Soviet Party to their advantage, establishing the narrative of a "good" Romanian Party surrounded and infiltrated by enemies and betrayers of the Party. This specific version of national-communism differed from the other versions which emerged in Eastern Europe after de-Stalinization, since its components were more clearly visible. By the mid-sixties, the two efforts were fused together politically, establishing the seed of a national-communist canon which was gradually enhanced and, after the seventies, fixed politically in a Party document, while the large majority of Romanian historical research institutions were put under the direct control of the Party.

Previous research on the general relationship between history and politics in communist Romania has generally been focused on the agency of the professional historians and of the state institutions for historical research.[121] Nevertheless, previous research negates any agency of the veterans and propagandists who performed history-writing tasks, and to institutions like the Party History Institute, which hosted them.[122] The recent

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[121] See Chapter 2.

[122] For example, cultural anthropologist Katherine Verdery, who has written a cornerstone volume about cultural politics in communist Romania, described the director of Party History Institute, Ion Popescu-Puțuri, as a "Party historian"; Verdery, *National Ideology under Socialism*, 355, note 35. A similar characterisation is made by historian

opening of the Institute's archive has provided the possibility to scrutinize previous assumptions, and to understand to what extent and how these historians and activists had agency in influencing the cultural politics of the regime, and therefore if and how they compromised professionals or active promoters of Party orders.

1.5 Research questions

The specific research questions of this dissertation emerge from the context of this case study against the general theoretical assumptions, both elucidated in the previous sub-chapters. The Party history that the Institute had to write as its first and most important task, was a conflictual, divisive and politically dangerous topic to write on in communist and national-communist Romania. For Stalinist Romania, history should have been dictated by Soviet standards: this created a conflict between the "Stalinizer" activists and propagandists, the historians who wanted to defend their cultural authority, and those who had experienced the interwar history of the Party. The period between 1955 and 1958 were years of major change, since the regime needed to reprogram the whole propaganda apparatus from total devotion to the Soviet Union towards national-communism. The common good, in consequence of the Soviet de-Stalinization which put at risk the Romanian leadership, was no longer in the Soviet Union, but in the national-communist Party. Subsequently, once national-communism was established, the efforts of the regime were aimed at writing the history of the Romanian Party, inscribing it in the national canon, trying to compensate for the essential insignificance of the Party in national history by using falsifications, omissions, magnifications, and hyperbole.

Alexander Zub, who described Popescu-Puțuri as a "historian in service", and dedicated only a few lines to the Party History Institute; Alexandru Zub, *Orizont închis. Istoriografia română sub dictatură* (Iaşi: Institutul European, 2000), 174, 174 n56. The scholars who in the mid-1970s started to problematize this historiography did not give it any scholarly value either. For example, historian Vlad Georgescu who fled the country in 1977 to become a Radio Free Europe journalist, has not scrutinized the power relationships inside Party History Institute, giving its historians no real agency; Vlad Georgescu, *Politică şi Istorie. Cazul comuniştilor români (1944–1977)* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1994), 101. See also the very harsh judgement given by Apostol Stan, who in his memoirs considers the Party History Institute historians as mere propagandists, in Apostol Stan, *Istorie şi politică în România comunistă* (Bucharest: Curtea Veche, 2010), 276–278.

Paraphrasing E. H. Carr, the study of the historians allows for a better understanding of historiography.[123] The Institute was not an institution for history-writing like the Romanian Academy History Institute or similar institutes in Romania: it was a sub-organization of the Central Committee of the Party. Therefore, it was an instrument created by the sovereign power in order to gain legitimacy by history-writing. The Party was not an authoritative power, but it exercised mere *imperium* on history-writing, and the Institute was its instrument. The Institute had to legitimize itself in the history-writing milieu, where national ideology was hegemonic, without contradicting its Marxist-Leninist nature as a Party institution. Therefore, the first two questions of this dissertation are:

- How did the Institute handle the dilemma of writing the RCP and Romanian history between a Stalinist canon and a national ideology canon?

- How did the Institute manoeuvre to achieve legitimacy by history-writing? What tensions were generated between the Party-imposed canon and the established professional standards when the Institute historians tried to assume cultural authority?

A possible understanding of these dilemmas could be gained by exploring the agency of the activists and historians at the Institute. Were they, in Gramscian terms, traditional intellectuals (independent from the dominant social group), organic intellectuals (those who grew organically with the dominant social group)?[124] Or, in Bourdieuian terms applied to this context:

- Which principles of hierarchization did they follow in their actions? Did they act for the good of the history discipline's scholarly tradition, for the Party, or for personal/collective success?

Since the Institute followed the present exigencies of the Party, the agency of its activists and historians is a key in order to understand the activities of the Institute in its context, and its changes and continuities over time. On the other hand, every change in policy represented for the Institute a time of serious danger in terms of stability, autonomy, and cultural authority. A

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[123] E. H. Carr. *What is History?* (London: Penguin, 1987), 23.
[124] Antonio Gramsci, *Quaderni dal Carcere* (Turin: Edizioni Einaudi, 1975), Vol. III, 1550–1551.

shift in the Party agenda was dangerous for the Institute, since this would imply criticism against previous Institute writings. Therefore:

- How could the Institute and its activists and historians handle changes in political directives?

A third question concerns the relationship between the agents (activists and historians) present in the Institute and the Party organization. Since empirically, the conflicts present in the Institute and in its surroundings are evidently related to the aforementioned changes, a question about their nature seems to be legitimate. Therefore, my main third question is:

- How do the changes relate to conflicts? Why were there conflicts in the Institute?

A first sub-question regards the "fronts" of the struggle, concerning the alliances that were formed in these struggles. Second, a number of hypotheses can be made concerning the nature of the conflicts: what were the reasons behind these struggles? Since the activists and historians had very different political, religious, and ethnic backgrounds, it is possible that these conflicts concerned identity matters, the recognition of various individual or collective identities, and that the conflicting sides were formed according to the lines of identity alliances. A third hypothesis is that the conflicts concerned ideological differences. Therefore, the subsequent questions are related to the nature of these conflicts and to the grouping activities inside the Institute.

- Did any struggle for resources exist in the Institute and in the surrounding fields of the Party and of history-writing? What were the roles of identity and ideology in these conflicts? How did they contribute to combining individual elements in alliances?

1.6 Methodology

The use of Foucault's and Bourdieu's works in the same theoretical/ ethodological framework could raise a question. Their strongest critic, Michel de Certeau, wrote that their works 'seem to be constructed by means of the same procedures. […] Both […] play the same trick when they transform practices isolated as aphasic and secret into the keystone of their

theory'.[125] Their common 'theorizing operation consists of two moments: first, *cut out*; then *turn over*'.[126] First, creating a coherent whole, and then turning over the units created: 'at first obscure, silent, and remote, the unit is inverted to become the element that illuminates theory and sustains discourse'.[127] The practices derived become the panopticon through which Foucault and Bourdieu see and understand everything.

For a historical inquiry, retrieving the practices that are not directly linked to the apparatuses and procedures allowed by sovereign power is the key for showing the complexity of history (and for providing an understanding of it). In the source materials available for my inquiry (see next chapter), the information retrievable which do not concern practices do instead provide descriptions of apparatuses and procedures (the ruling Party organizational plan and its ideology). Therefore, those informal, taboo, and obscure practices (like networking, patron-client relationships, quest for positions and resources, rhetorical strategies) are not "isolated", but *accompanied by* elements of positivist history (legitimacy, sovereignty, diplomacy, politics) which by themselves are not capable of explaining the practices that do not derive from political power, and which consequently offer only a limited interpretation of history.

Practices like informal networking, patron-client relationships, and personal, networks' or groups' quests for positions and resources were taboo, under communism, since they were obstacles for the realization of the procedures generated by the Party. Consequently, they were obscure, since they were dissimulated under the most different rhetorical strategies of representation. Therefore, merging a history of sovereignty *and* a history of the practices that were performed in their apparatuses is a good way to understand a greater part of the relationship between politics and history-

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[125] Michel de Certeau, *The Practices of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 62–63.

[126] Ibid., 62: 'In Foucault, the procedures hidden in the details of educational, military, or clinical control, microapparatuses without discursive legitimacy, […]. […]In Bourdieu, the remote and opaque place organized by wily, polymorphic and transgressive "strategies" in relation to the order of discourse is also inverted in order to give its plausibility and its essential articulation to a theory recognizing the reproduction of the same order everywhere'

[127] Ibid., 63: '*Through* them and *in* them, nothing escapes Foucault. They allow his discourse to be itself and to be theoretically panoptical, *seeing everything*. In Bourdieu, […] reduced to the *habitus* which exteriorizes itself in them, these strategies […] provide Bourdieu with the means of explaining everything and of being conscious of everything'.

writing under communism (or whatever system of practices and politics is under scrutiny).

Therefore, I do not "adopt" the theories by Bourdieu and Foucault, but instead I use the concepts and ideas from a historian of ideas whose work was intended to explain the dynamics arising from modernity (Foucault) and from an ethnographer/sociologist (Bourdieu) who provided strong arguments for the continuity through historical change (while ignoring the possibilities of historical change). Although their way of making the theory of practices certainly does not allow one to see everything, as de Certeau wrote, it 'allows one to score points' in that direction anyway.

1.6.1 The bureaucratic order

The organizational dimension of the Party History Institute must be taken into account due to the strict vertical hierarchization of scholarly activities under the communist regime. The Party was the unique provider of funds and the Party hierarchies were the official monopolists of the available resources. Fortunately, the genealogy of culture[128] in communist Romania is distinguishable in the documents left by the Party organization. Since Marxism-Leninism was considered by the Party as the ultimate science[129], producing reliable knowledge, the Party History Institute was certainly a product of this "science". Its organization aimed at controlling the practices of history-writing in order to determine the final product.

The Party History Institute should definitely be seen as a bureaucratic organization. According to Max Weber, bureaucratic organizations are based on a hierarchy of command, impersonality, written rules and regulations, the specialised training of the employees, a division of labour, and efficiency.[130] Certainly, the history of the Institute is more than the history of a Weberian ideal type organization, being actually a complex history of

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[128] Foucault defines culture as 'a hierarchical organization of values, accessible to everybody, but at the same time the occasion of a mechanism of selection and exclusion'. In Michel Foucault, *The Hermeneutics of the Subject. Lectures at the Collège de France, 1981–82* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 179.

[129] A 'regime of truth', according to Foucault – specific mechanisms which produce discourses which function as true in particular times and places. Discourse transmits and produces power: 'it reinforces it, but also undermines and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart'; in Micheal Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: The Will to Knowledge* (London, Penguin, 1998), 101.

[130] Max Weber, *Economy and Society* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), (or. ed. 1922), 956–958.

interrelations between different actors and a field of tension between different aims. Nevertheless, these tensions were masked by the bureaucratic language of the organization and the 'wooden' language of the Party, all of which contributed to making those dynamics indiscernible. Understanding of the elements of the organizational *doxa*[131] can be methodologically helpful in order to decode the conflicts cyphered in the official language of the Party documents, and therefore to reconstruct their genealogy with the help of the mechanisms of power that shaped the discourse.[132]

The organization promoted an identity, which was the collective understanding of what was central, distinctive, and durable. This identity defined the organization itself, and the properties of this identity guided its actions.[133] The language used in the official documents refers to what the organization did, but it also transmits information on *how it should have been* and *how its members should have acted*.[134] It is important, for my analysis, to stress that among the many instrumental identities performed by the members of the Institute, the organizational identity was certainly one of them.

The bureaucratic organization had its relevance in defining the official rhetoric that the activists used to communicate among themselves, and in defining the dialectics of the profession. It was the bureaucratic order that defined what kinds of dynamics were acceptable within the Institute, and that contributed to defining the social space, its values,[135] and the positions of the propagandists and historians (agents) within it.[136]

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[131] *Bourdieu, Outline of a Theory of Practice (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 164.*

[132] Foucault, *Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972), 234: 'The genealogical side of discourse […] deals with series of effective formation of discourse: it attempts to grasp it in its power of affirmation, by which I do not mean a power opposed to that of negation, but the power of constituting domains of objects, in relation to which one can affirm or deny true or false propositions'.

[133] Nils Brunsson. *Mechanisms of Hope* (Copenhagen: Copenhagen Business School Press, 2006), 16–17.

[134] Jenny Jansson developed the classic concept of organizational identity elaborated by Albert Stuart and David A. Whetten ['Organizational identity', *Research in Organizational Behavior*, 7 (1985), 263–295] by focusing on centrality and distinctiveness of an organization, which are given by its history, properties, and actions. Jenny Jansson, 'From movement to organization: constructing identity in Swedish trade unions', *Labour History*, 54 (3/2013), 304–305.

[135] According to Carl Amery, 'honesty, consciousness, tidiness, punctuality, reliability in the performance of tasks, diffidence towards the excesses and noisiness, any ambivalence, any ambiguity and obedience to authority' were the positive qualities of the petit-bourgeois modern bureaucrats' amoral virtue system which guaranteed and

When analysing the interests of individuals and networks, the bureaucratic organization imposed cannot be ignored when dealing with Party history. But, as organizational studies suggest, organizations are inconsistent institutions since they are characterised by the irrationality and arationality of their mechanisms. These mechanisms are intended to be effective and efficient in achieving the organizational goal, which is perceived as rational. Therefore, goals and mechanisms of the organization differ.[137] This can explain the many reforms of the mechanisms of the Institute: the reforms were aimed at realizing the organizational goals.

1.6.2 Collective biography and French prosopography

The methodology of traditional collective biography, focused on a small group and enriched by the 'French prosopography' methodology,[138] can contribute to create a deeper understanding of the practices performed in the Institute, and of the dynamic relationships between their protagonists.[139] As Donald Broady explains, the first aim of the researcher must be directed neither towards the investigation of individuals nor to their interactions, but rather 'to the history and structure of the field itself',[140] which gives meaning to the actions of the individuals. The Bourdieuian notion of *field*, in fact, defines people struggling over something, and it is taken for granted that the quest for hegemony directs the intentions and wills of the protagonists, and thus the history of the collective considered. In this empirical case, different groups were formed over time in the struggle between networks competing for power and resources, where group boundaries were flexible rather than fixed.

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safeguarded the totalitarian regime in Nazi Germany; See Carl Amery, *Capitulation: The Lesson of German Catholicism* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1967), 29–32.
[136] For the definition of social space, see Bourdieu, 'Social Space and Symbolic Power', *Sociological Theory* 7 (1/1989), 14–25.
[137] Brunsson, 23.
[138] The whole work of Pierre Bourdieu has been considered by Donald Broady as a new kind of prosopography, namely 'French prosopography' or 'Bourdieuian prosopography'. Broady has defined Bourdieu's methodology as 'the study of individuals belonging to the same field […] based on comprehensive collection of data […] on these individuals, […] their position in the social space and in the field'; and, most important, 'the main object of study is not the individuals per se but rather the history and structure of the field'. In Donald Broady, 'French Prosopography. Definition and suggested readings', in *Poetics* 30 (5–6/2002), 381–385; 381–382.
[139] Ibidem.
[140] Ibidem, 383.

A collective biography structured as a French prosopography has some similarities with the point of departure of actor-network theory, which considers the social structure made of individuals and organizations.[141] According to this theory, human behaviour and social processes cannot be explained by the attributes of individuals or collective actors. What counts here is the position occupied in the network, the relational data that relate one agent to another and therefore cannot be reduced to the properties of the individual agents themselves. 'Relations are not the properties of agents but of systems of agents; […] network analysis consists of a body of qualitative measures of network structure'.[142]

1.6.3 Elite interactions in communist Romania: "groups", networks, and individuals.

Existing scholarly literature and memoirs make references to a number of presumed "groups" and "networks" among the elites in communist Romania, but the meaning of these categories is not clear. In this section I will briefly clarify terms such as "Muscovite", "autochthonous", "veteran", "Bessarabian", "Jew", and "young"; labels that will be used later in the text to indicate the protagonists of events. Are these terms consistent with the study of the intra-Party conflicts and the conflicts between members of the historians' community and the Party organization? What contribution can they make?

The scholars writing on the Romanian Communist Party have frequently made reference to the labels "Muscovite groups" and "autochthonous groups",[143] often preceded by "the so-called", but without explaining how

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[141] Defined as "nodes". Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social. An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005). The most striking definition, even if in metaphor, is given by Latour: the actor–network theory 'is nothing but an extended form of Machiavellianism' (252).

[142] John Scott, *Social Network Analysis. An introduction* (London: Sage, 2000), 9–10; quoted in Keats-Rohan, Katherine (ed.), *Prosopography. Approaches and Applications. A handbook* (Oxford: University of Oxford, 2007), 23.

[143] These labels are mentioned, even if within brackets, i.e. in Tismaneanu, *Stalinism for all seasons*, 22, 36, 88, 96, 104, 106, 119, 123, 133, 145, 175; Verdery, *National Ideology under Socialism*, 104. Bogdan Cristian Iacob, *Stalinism, Historians, and the Nation*, Doctoral Dissertation (Budapest: Central European University, 2011), 233. Adrian Cioroianu, *Pe Umerii lui Marx. O introducere în istorie comunismului românesc* (Bucharest: Curtea Veche, 2003), 52. Coiroianu intends "group" as "pressure group", and recognizes 'the labyrinth of the elite games […] [in] the durability of a certain kind of Byzantine (or archetypal) relationships'; ibid., 52. See also note 100.

these groups are defined, or their relevance to explaining the power struggles. The labels ("autochthonous" vs. "Muscovites") have the general bias that they channel the interpretation of the Party's history according to the standard historical narratives of the Romanian Communist Party, and also in accordance with the predominant narratives of post-1989 memoirs.[144] The significance of these narratives tends to collapse into their original politicized significances given in 1960 by Gheorghiu-Dej, the self-appointed leader of the "autochthonous" faction, in his cleansing of the "Muscovite" faction, allegedly composed by 'foreign' or non-ethnic elements. As early as 1952, Gheorghiu-Dej obtained Stalin's permission to eliminate his political enemies within the Party, and by 1960 he could portray his former adversaries as "emissaries of Stalin and Stalinism". Furthermore, as Dennis Deletant has pointed out, 'neither of these two groups, "local communists" and "Muscovites", was very rigidly defined since personal allegiance often cut across this artificial division'.[145]

Using the labels "Muscovite" and "autochthonous" uncritically would therefore be a mistake: it could lead to a very biased understanding of the power struggles taking place within the Party. It must be remembered that none of those who were called "Muscovites" actually called themselves that; it was rather a negative label attached to those who had spent the interwar period in the Soviet Union. In some cases, the Bessarabian and/or Jewish origins of the protagonists of these power struggles are brought forward, and some attempts are made to describe these groups as cohesive entities. However, these narratives mainly consist of short anecdotes that do not convincingly show the coherence of these groups during the intra-Party conflicts: members of the different 'groups' spoke Russian among themselves, lived in the same quarters in the capital, and met regularly at parties and during their free time.[146] This dichotomy of "Muscovite" versus "autochthonous" may contribute somewhat to the understanding of the everyday life of the persons involved in those conflicts, and may give some

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[144] All the memoirs consulted make use of these labels. See chapter 3.

[145] See Dennis Deletant, *Communist Terror in Romania*, 147. Deletant acknowledges also other authors who consider the category of group as flexible: Bela Vago, 'Romania' in Martin McCauley (ed.), *Communist Power in Europe, 1944–1949* (London: Macmillan, 1977), l13; Michael Shafir, *Romania: Politics, Economics and Society* (London: Pinter, 1985), 35; and Mary Ellen Fischer, *Nicolae Ceauşescu. A Study in Political Leadership*, Lynne Rienner, Boulder, 42. All these texts are quoted in Deletant, *Communist Terror in Romania,* 147.

[146] Tismaneanu, *Lumea Secretă a nomenclaturii* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2007), 34; 207.

colour to the narrative on the struggle for power, but it is questionable whether it actually offers any real indication of the interactions among the participants in these conflicts, or of the particular nature of the conflicts themselves.

Rather than viewing these categories as fixed entities, the focus should be on the grouping definition process. The actors of the network conflicts were, as usual,[147] the first to start such a process of defining competing groups.[148] In the internal discussions reported in documents from the second half of the 1950s, the young cadres are indicated as "young" by the "veterans,"[149] who tended to voice complaints. Concerning the historio-graphical field, the distinction between "Party activists" and "historians" is described in the historians' memoirs published after 1989 as the struggle of the latter to gain hegemony in the area of history-writing, a hegemony that would mean the reaffirmation of previously suppressed national values. Characteristics such as the origins of these individuals, their beliefs and values, and their proximity to a powerful protector, are certainly elements that would allow their actions to be seen in the specific context in which they acted, but at the same time these charateristics have a certain bias when establishing a dividing line between the positively-described group and its negative counterpart.[150]

The risks involved when considering certain groups as actors, excluding the individuals and their instrumental use of networks, are manifold. First of all, the scenario in which those conflicts took place was regulated by Party rule. Understanding the struggle for power as a game without rules would mean neglecting the context of the communist regime as a vital part of the analysis. All the individuals involved in these struggles, including the non-Party-member historians, were subject to the rule of the Party, a rule that was not merely hierarchical, but dictated by organizational rules[151] and

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[147] Latour, 32.

[148] Rogers Brubaker writes on "groupism": 'we should not uncritically adopt categories of ethnopolitical practices as our categories of social analysis'; Rogers Brubaker, 'Ethnicity without Groups', *Archives Européennes de Sociologie* XLIII (2/2002): 163–189; 166.

[149] The "veterans" (*illegalişti*) were the communist members that joined the Party before the overthrow of the fascist regime on August 23rd, 1944. The "veterans" I refer to include also the "veteran" category described by Robert Levy (the veterans of the Spanish war and of the France Resistance); see Robert Levy, *Ana Pauker. The Rise and Fall of a Jewish Communist* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 153–155.

[150] 'For every group to be defined, a list of anti-groups is set up as well'. Latour, 32.

[151] See the classical study on the organizations and their principles: Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1947).

by the positions of the agents in the network. While it is true that Gheorghiu-Dej launched a recruitment of activists in whom he could personally trust, these links should probably be seen as personal, not based on group affiliation.[152]

Second, the actions of the persons involved in these events were sometimes individual, and sometimes dictated by collective interests, but not, I would argue, by a pre-established group loyalty. Here I adopt Bruno Latour's argument on groups: 'there is no relevant group that can be said to make up social aggregates, no established component that can be used as incontrovertible starting point'[153] for the scholar to describe the social world, since it is not the researcher's duty 'to decide in advance and in the members' stead what the social world is made of'.[154] A very similar standpoint on the nature of groups has also been taken by nationalism scholar Rogers Brubaker, who denies the understanding of groups as entities and actors, since 'reifying groups is what ethnopolitical entrepreneurs (like other political entrepreneurs) are in the business of doing'.[155] Brubaker finds the analysis of Bourdieu 'cynical', since in many historical cases, group crystallization and polarization have been the result of changes, and not vice versa. Dividing people into groups is quite feasible, but sometimes the labels applied do not provide any understanding when analysing the actions of the people involved. As Bruno Latour has written, the actors were there already before the social scientist came and attempted to categorize them; therefore, their network relationship is what counts and what gives meaning to their actions.[156] Categorizing the protagonists of this history in groups by their collective biographical characteristics and not by their individual actions would therefore be misleading.

Third, individuals could actually belong to more than one group: for example, one could at the same time be a veteran, Muscovite, and autochthonous. For example, Ana Pauker, identified by her rival Gheorghiu-Dej as a

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[152] Kenneth Jowitt, Revolutionary Breakthroughs and National Development: The case of Romania, 1944–1965 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), 147.

[153] Latour, 29.

[154] Ibid., 29 n30.

[155] Rogers Brubaker, 'Neither individualism nor "groupism". A Reply to Craig Calhoun', *Ethnicities* 3 (4/2003), 557.

[156] Latour, 155. Latour accepts partially and critically the model of sociology of scientists offered by Bourdieu, introducing reflexivity, meaning the ability of the social scientist to understand that the only possible fruitful analysis of social aggregates is the empirical observation of already assembled social entities – not of ones that the social scientist actively assembles. Latour, 12.

"Muscovite", was also a veteran, but during the time of her political ascendance the category of "Party veterans" had very little significance in the ongoing power struggle, so in that sense that specific category was clearly irrelevant. Instead, Pauker's rivalling Party comrades saw her as an adversary, and for this reason considered her a "Muscovite". Here is the limit of Brubaker's criticism of individualism: even if identification and 'self-identification […] always exist in dialectical interplay with ascribed identifications and categorizations, especially those employed by powerful, authoritative institutions – above all, the modern state'[157] this dialectic has its own limit given by the action of the individual, and of his/her instrumental use of the strategy of representation of the self and of the others – which Brubaker also admits.[158]

Looking more closely at the meaning of the categories used, what did it actually mean to be a "veteran"? Basically, it was a status symbol, represented by the term *ilegalist* – that is, being a member of the Party before 23 August 1944, the date of the fall of the Antonescu regime. Symbolically, it divided the members of the Party into two defined groups: those who had struggled to make the new world possible, and the "youngsters" who should, according to the "veterans", always be devoted to them[159] and to what they represented. A hypothesis that will drive this work is that the "veterans" wanted the history of the Party to be *their* history, since this would clearly increase their symbolic capital in the ongoing competition with the "youngsters" about power, prestige, and material resources.

In this respect, the categories of veterans and young propagandists were much more fixed than the presumed "Muscovite" and "autochthonous" groups, whose composition was more *fluid*, consequent to the political exigencies of single individuals and networks. Individuals could in fact change networks, and try as much as possible to distance themselves from an ascribed label. In 1957, when some veterans attacked the Party Secretary, many other veterans immediately distanced themselves from them. It is noteworthy that this instance has remained famous as "the fall of the veterans", in spite of the fact that the Party Secretary was himself a veteran.

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[157] Quote by R. Brubaker, 'Neither individualism nor "groupism"', 557.
[158] According to Brubaker, 'the "spin" put on conflicts by participants may conceal as much as it reveals and […] the representation of conflicts as conflicts between ethnic or national groups may obscure the interests at stake and the dynamics involved'. Brubaker, 'Ethnicity without Groups', 176.
[159] Tismaneanu, *Lumea Secretă a nomenclaturii*, Humanitas, Bucharest, 34; 207.

Consequently, how do these categorizations help us to understand the actions of the protagonists in these power conflicts? I see it as much more rewarding to consider the actions as conducted by individuals who used the existing networks in an instrumental manner, and to consider the relationships of groups and networks while taking account of the possible inconsistency of these categories. The individual actor should be seen as primarily motivated by personal goals when becoming attached to a network in a system of patronage and clientelism. One of the first scholar of Soviet Union, Merle Fainsod, has noticed that informal networks of collaboration were a constant in Soviet Union's history, despite they were officially forbidden.[160] Sheila Fitzpatrick has pointed out that patronage and clientelism in Stalin's Soviet Union provided much needed safeguards against everyday insecurity and personal pitfalls.[161] Those relationships were sometimes generated hierarchically between patrons and clients,[162] and sometimes as occasional exchanges of favours between individuals in non-hierarchical positions (the system of *blat*).[163] Patrons were Party members who could access resources, and who consequently were the major source of patronage.[164] The advantages of clientelism lay in the possibility to obtain vital goods and services, protection against purges and adversaries, and positive intervention in professional disputes. The person who could attract

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[160] Merle Fainsod, who inaugurated the field of Soviet studies in the 1950s, spelled out very clearly the un-ideological, and resource-oriented struggle that characterized the Soviet Union: 'Diverse interests exist below the outwardly placid surface of Party uniformity and manifest themselves in devious manoeuvres, in struggles for power, and even in conflicting conceptions of proper strategy and tactics. Informal organization of the Party approaches a constellation of power centres, some of greater and some of lesser magnitude, and each with its accompanying entourage of satellites with fields of influence extending through the Party, police, and the administrative and military hierarchies. […] Despite the most drastic disciplinary measures, family circles and mutual protection associations persist in reappearing even after they have been theoretically extirpated. Their continuing vitality is a reminder of the difficulties which the totalitarian Party confronts in seeking to fulfil its totalitarian aspirations'. Merle Fainsod, *How Russia is Ruled* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963), 236–7; quoted in Timothy K. Blauvelt, 'Patronage and betrayal in the post-Stalin succession: The case of Kruglow and Serov', *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 41 (1/ 2008), 105–120; 105–106.
[161] Sheila Fitzpatrick, *Patronage and the Intelligentsia in Stalin's Russia*, in *Challenging Traditional Views in Russian History*, ed. Stephen G. Wheatcroft (New York: Palgrave-McMillan, 2002), 92–111; 106.
[162] Ibid., 103.
[163] Ibid., 92–94.
[164] Ibid., 94.

the most powerful patron usually won the quest,[165] without leaving self-evident traces for the historian who would like to know more about these relationships.[166] For the patron, the cost of a patron-client relationship was repaid in terms of trust by the client, with the creation of a bond of loyalty, which could have served in the networks' struggles when the power relationships were maintained unaltered. Once the power relationships changed, loyalty from the clients ceased. In a context of change, if the clients had not compromised too much with a former patron, they could turn their loyalty, in the search for trust, towards other more successful patrons. More often, individuals were clients for more than one patron at a time, for different purposes. The patron-client relationships were kept secret once operative, so they could survive. For the patrons, it was necessary that the clients were related publicly to the patron not in terms of clientelism (since this was officially taboo), while for the clients this secretiveness was necessary in order to gain as many patrons as possible, in the quest for power and positions.

That is how individuals could obtain a certain leverage, using competing networks in a context of a struggle for power, control, and resources. The individuals played their part in this struggle by trying to gain entrance to the most influential networks while at the same time distancing themselves from the losing networks, always being ready to quickly shift their affiliations when required by circumstances. For these reasons, in the following pages I will refer to the actions of individuals, considering them part of one or several networks. The references I will make to the characteristics of these individuals ("autochthonous", "Bessarabian", "Hungarian", "Jew", "veteran", "young", "historian") should not induce the reader to see these labels as representing any kind of stable affiliation; they are primarily used to describe the characteristics of the members of a network, or as elements of biographical information.

However, how these labels were used as instruments of competition in the struggle for resources is a qualitatively different matter. Networks composed of individuals with similar origins and values certainly existed, but their existence as a "group" was only temporary, when the actions of a network of individuals concretized in a specific action towards a common goal, for the defence of the interests of its members, against other com-

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[165] Ibid., 97.
[166] Ibid., 100–101.

peting networks.[167] Gheorghiu-Dej and his network can thus be identified as a "group" when they joined together to achieve a common goal, for instance to control the organizational structure of the Party.[168]

"Group" should therefore be used as a category indicating a conflict between networks. This clash contributed to defining a set of positive and negative values that influenced the network composition. During the intra-Party purges, the leadership presented itself as "good" and "right", defining as "bad" and "wrong" the defeated adversaries, and characterising them as a *group*, meaning a collective of individuals linked by the same values – values that were hostile to the orthodoxy dictated by the leadership. This leadership, in its new self-narrative, did not label itself as a "group", since it presented the same pretence of totality that the state had in fascist Italy: to paraphrase Gentile and Mussolini, nothing was outside of the Party.

In the case of the "veterans", the leadership distinguished between a group of "hostile saboteurs", who were punished, and those who chose to remain loyal, who were praised as heroes. The definition of the intra-Party enemies as groups (or factions) made it possible to draw a line of demarcation between what was acceptable and what was not, and between who the legitimate leaders were and who were their (closest) enemies. There is also a distinct possibility that in many cases networks were used instrumentally by the individuals in order to obtain personal advantages, and not in accordance with the common goal of a group.

In addition to this discussion on analytical concepts, I should clarify what I mean by "propagandist" and "Party historian". With the concept "propagandist" I indicate a Party member who had attended the Party High School and/or who belonged to a propaganda institution. When I refer to a "historian",

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[167] Following Pierre Bourdieu, contrary to the reification of concepts 'one must assert that the classes that can be separated out in the social space [...] do not exist as real groups although they explain the probability of individuals constituting themselves in practical groups'. Bourdieu, 'The Social Space and the Genesis of Groups', *Theory and Society* 14 (6/1985), 723–744; 725.

[168] Jowitt, 146: 'Control for what reasons? Gheorghiu-Dej and a number of his closest supporters wanted control of the Party not merely for power, but in order to assert the primacy of the Party apparatus with the regime, to shape the Party's character in a specific direction, and to give it a content which they saw as properly Leninist and particularly necessary during the breaking-through phase.'. Jowitt criticized Ştefan Fisher-Galaţi's statement: 'no matter what the official reasons for Pauker's, Luca's and Georgescu's removal from power in 1952, the real ones are solely connected with the struggle for control over the Party', in Ştefan Fisher-Galaţi, *The new Rumania*, 39, and quoted ibidem.

I refer to those who had completed their higher education in history at one of the state universities. I believe that this distinction is important, since the education of the propagandists and the historians was very different; they were provided with different ideas concerning history-writing and the world in general, and probably had access to different networks of belonging. National-communism held sway for more than two decades and its heritage is still partially alive today since it allowed not only one voice to be present in the official discourse but many, albeit under firm guidance. When deconstructing the constituent parts of that discourse one should recognize its complexity and the multifaceted aspects of its composition.

Previous research

After the Romanian Communist Party (RCP) was outlawed in December 1989, there was no longer any need for an institution to write its history. In February 1990, the Institute for Historical and Socio-Political Sciences of the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party (ISISP) ceased to exist, after 39 years of loyal service to the communist regime. After this date, ISISP, as an institution for the production of national-communist historiography has received only very secondary attention by scholars in the humanities. Even specialised historiography has not considered the study of ISISP, despite the fact that sources pertaining to it are plentiful. In fact, the legacy of ISISP to present day Romania is a huge number of monographs, edited Party documents, and two journals published between 1955 and 1989 –they still represent the most significant remains of this 'excellent cadaver' of communism, as Şerban Papacostea defined it,[1] for the study of RCP historiography.

The pages that follow aim at reviewing the previous scholarly research on Romanian historiography during communism, and at tracing a bibliographical trajectory of pre- and post-1989 historiography on the relationship between historical research and politics in communist Romania. The analysis also indicates the social limits and obstacles that prevented the scholarly community from focusing on ISISP, the major topics of interest developed in the scholarly field that analysed the relationship between historiography and politics in communist Romania, and also how this field of study was actually created.

Trying to summarize the way in which a field of study was defined, and indicating its origin and development through the study of the historical

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[1] Interview of the author with Şerban Papacostea, Bucharest, February 7, 2013.

narratives before 1989, means to analyse the attempts of the scholarly community to find a suitable narrative canon for the history of communist Romania. In this context, the study of historical research under communism tended to move "deeper", beyond the actual texts, proceeding almost in chronological order in the study of the relationship between historians and the regime. Like all kinds of categorization, the one that follows is also arbitrary; but knowledge is mostly categorization, and my contribution in this sense is, beyond identifying the major studies that focus on the topic, to include in this short review the studies dedicated to previously considered "ancillary" subjects, such as the regime's cultural politics and the cultural institutions. I will focus on the history of historiography, on the formation and development of the field of study on scholarship and politics, which was initiated in the early 1990s and endorsed by the Romanian state only at a later stage, while narrowing down the discussion to the studies dedicated to the topic.

Three main types of literature are not presented in this chapter: the historiographical products of the Institute, the memoirs of Romanian historians written after 1989,[2] as well as other non-academic reports on Romanian historiography.[3] While the memoires will be presented in the next chapter, since they need contextualization, the products of the Institute and the non-academic reports on the Institute will be presented (and analysed) in the empirical chapters.

[2] This particular kind of sources will be analysed in chapter three.

[3] I am referring principally to the reports produced and broadcast by Radio Free Europe's Romanian Unit in the period 1946–1995. Those broadcasts and reports had a fundamental role in shaping the discourse on Romania during communism. RFE was a powerful anti-communist enemy for the Romanian regime, listened to by most of domestic Romania. The archive is stored at the Open Society Archive, Budapest; available on http://osaarchivum.org/db/fa/300-60.htm. Despite the importance of Radio Free Europe in shaping the national cultural discourse ('the iron curtain was not soundproof'), I choose to delimit the field of my previous research to the scholarly production. On Radio Free Europe, see Arch Puddington, *Broadcasting Freedom. The Cold War Triumph of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 2003); on the importance of Radio Free Europe in Romania, watch the documentary by Alexandru Solomon, *Cold Waves – Război pe calea undelor*. Romania, 2007, colour, 155'.

2.1 Previous research on historical narratives produced by the communist regime

Three monographs and two articles published before 1989 have focused on the reinterpretation of history instigated by the Stalinist regime in communist Romania. In 1961, Michael I. Rura was the first to write on the reinterpretation of history as a method adopted by the regime to further communism. According to Rura, the communist regime considered the traditional Romanian historiography as an obstacle to its political aims, an obstacle that could be removed by reinterpreting the historical past with the help of Marxism-Leninism. Historiography was revised structurally and fundamentally altered in its contents. Rura distinguishes between four modalities of reinterpretation: by omission, by substitution, by emphasis, and by corruption of historical narrative elements, and demonstrates that the historiography written under communism was neither factual nor objective.[4] Despite the validity of his assessment, his work has a normative trait of anti-communist engagement, seen in the use of U.S. State Department sources on acts of violence perpetrated by the communist regime, and the arbitrary division of the historiography into "communist" and "non-communist".[5]

The second monograph on the subject was written by Dionise Ghermani in 1967. An engineer by education, and a former legionary of the Iron Guard in the interwar period, Ghermani wrote from his exile in Munich on the reinterpretation of medieval history in communist Romania.[6] In the same way as Rura, Ghermani analyses the political intentions of the reinterpretation of history during Stalinist times, focusing on the international events that contributed to the modification of history-writing – the distancing from the Soviet Union in the early 1960s and the effects of the April Declaration in 1964, when national-communism was announced as the official policy of the regime.

A more scholarly contribution was made by historian Vlad Georgescu, who in 1977 wrote his first manuscript version of *Politics and History. The*

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[4] Michael I. Rura, *Reinterpretation of history as a method of furthering communism in Romania* (Washington Georgetown University Press, 1961), XI.
[5] Ibid., 117–123.
[6] Dionise Ghermani, *Die kommunistische Umdeutung der rumánischen Geschichte unter besonderer Berücksichtigung des Mittelalters* (Munich: Verlag R. Oldenbourg, 1967).

Case of Romanian Communists,[7] which analyses the redefinition of the historiographical field by the communist regime and the main trends and changes happening between 1944 and 1977. His powerful narrative shows the aberrant means by which history was falsified under Gheorghiu-Dej, and its grotesque continuation under Ceaușescu. Georgescu could not enter into the precise details of the relationship between politics and history, and could not identify more clearly the interactions between activists/historians within their institutions. Delivering his manuscript to be printed abroad cost Georgescu two months in prison, after which he left the country. Having previously taught at several universities in the United States, he later joined the Radio Free Europe in Munich where the monograph was later published in 1981. Georgescu's substantial cultural capital among researchers and anti-communist activists allowed *Politică și Istorie* to become the starting point for most subsequent scholarly works in the field.

In Germany, where Ghermani and Georgescu were based, two articles on contemporary Romanian historiography appeared in scholarly journals in the early 1980s as a part of a wider study of the interdependence of historiography and politics in Eastern Europe, a research programme directed by Gunther Stökl between 1975 and 1983.[8] Manfred Stoy wrote on the evolution of communist historiography from 1965 to 1980, considering the period from the foundation of the Principalities in Moldova and Walachia until their unification with Romania.[9] Klaus P. Beer wrote an article on the interdependency between history of interwar and war-time historiography and politics in Romania from 1945 to 1980.[10] Both articles continue in Ghermani's footsteps, limiting their analyses to the historiography produced but also to a first critical outline of the institutions and journals that

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[7] Vlad Georgescu, *Politică și istorie. Cazul comuniștilor români, 1944–1947* (Munich: Jon Dumitru Verlag, 1981) (2nd ed.: 1983). See also Vlad Georgescu, 'Politics, History and Nationalism: The Origins of Romania's Socialist Personality Cult' in *The Cult of Power. Dictatorship in the Twentieth Century,* ed. Joseph Held, (Boulder, 1983). *Politică și istorie* was republished in Romania in 1990.

[8] See Gunther Stöckl, 'Schlussbericht über das Forschungsprojekt „Die Interdependenz von Historiographie und Politik in Osteuropa" (Köln, six. Januar 1983)', on http://www.europa.clio-online.de/Portals/_Europa/documents/B2009/Q_Troebst_ Schlussbericht.pdf.

[9] Manfred Stoy, 'Politik und Geschichtswissenschaft in Rumänien 1965–1980. Die Historiographie über den Zeitraum von der Gründung der Fürstentümer Moldau und Walachei bis 1859', *Südost-Forschungen* 41 (1982), 219–259.

[10] Klaus P. Beer, 'Die Interdependenz von Geschichtswissenschaft und Politik in Rumänien von 1945 bis 1980. Die Historiographie über den Zeitraum von 1918 bis 1945', *Jahrbücherfür Geschichte Osteuropas* 32 (1984), 241–274.

produced them. Stoy's and Beer's efforts in the early eighties were almost completely overlooked in the Romanian and in the Anglo-Saxon tradition. The same destiny was not reserved for English intellectuals, given the strong links with Romania among personalities like Richard Clark and Robert William Seton-Watson, who had been involved politically in Romanian matters, a fact that allowed them to establish several scholarly collaborations with Romania.[11]

After the fall of communism, the field benefited from an unexpectedly great attention from the general public thanks to Lucian Boia's *Istorie și mit în conştiinţa româneasca*, a volume whose aim was to point out how historical and political myths of the nineteenth century were still maintained artificially in contemporary Romania. Boia deconstructs the "four pillars" of Romanian history (origins, continuity, unity, and independence), that still after 1989 continued the autochronist and authoritarian mythology that had been elaborated during the last two centuries. Boia makes only a few explicit references to the ISISP historians, describing them as followers of the Party line,[12] and as promoters of the Dacians as forefathers of the Romanians (in opposition to the myth of the Roman or Daco-Roman origins).[13] In respect to the historiography of the historical narratives that

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[11] Historian and political activist Robert William Seton-Watson actively encouraged the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Empire after the First World War, being acclaimed an honorary citizen of Cluj for his political efforts. He published in 1934 *A History of the Roumanians*. President of the British Royal Historical Society from 1946 to 1949, he was also chair of Czechoslovak studies at the University of Oxford. He died in 1951. His son Hugh Seton-Watson kept the father's legacy with Eastern Europe: he worked for the Foreign Office in Bucharest during the war. In 1945, he was appointed praelector in politics at the University College in Oxford, and from 1951 to 1983 he was chair of Russian history at the University of London. He produced several volumes on Eastern Europe between 1945 and 1985: Hugh Seton-Watson, *Eastern Europe between the Wars*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1945); idem, *Nationalism and Communism: Essays, 1946–1963* (Methuen, 1964); idem, *The "sick heart" of modern Europe: The Problem of the Danube Lands* (Washington University of Washington, 1975); idem, *Language and National Consciousness* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981); idem, *The East European Revolution* (Westview Press, 1985).
[12] Lucian Boia, *Istorie și mit în conştiinţa româneasca* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1997). Translated into English by the Central European University: *History and Myth in Romanian Consciousness* (Budapest-New York, CEU Press, 2001), 81. See also Lucian Boia, *Mitologia ştiinţifică a comunismului* (Bucureşti, Humanitas, 1999); Marin Niţescu, *Sub zodia proletcultismului. Dialectica puterii* (Bucharest, Humanitas, 1995).
[13] Ibidem, 103. Boia identifies the Institute as 'an organism invested with scholarly and ideological authority in communist Romania', 105. The Institute is then identified as a promoter of acknowledged forgeries (p. 79) and as responsible for 'the lowest point of the [history] profession' (103).

appeared during the Cold War, Boia could benefit of the end of the communist regime, being able to analyse also the last decade of Ceauşescu, and the excesses of nationalism that are portrayed in the eighties' historiographical products.

In the 1990s, and inspired by the "deconstructionist turn", many studies were dedicated to analysis of the development of specific historiographical themes in communist Romania – for example, the takeover on 23rd August 1944,[14] the Holocaust in Romania,[15] the protochronist[16] and Dacianist[17] tendencies, and the Romanian-Soviet relationships.[18] All these articles outlined the nationalist tendencies present in communist historiography and its exculpating function in respect to a problematic past. Nevertheless, a comprehensive synthesis of the trajectory of Romanian historiography under communism still remains to be written.

The works considered here aimed at analysing the historical narratives produced in communist Romania, indicating the clearly instrumental use of history by the regime. They also constituted a first approach to the study of the relationship between the history discipline and politics. In these works, Party and Party historians were generally identified as the very same thing, and the dynamics within the profession during communist times were not seriously analysed, except for a few marginal references. As we will see in the next subparagraph, the second kind of approach to the field was developed

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[14] Ştefan Borbély, 'Politics as a memory distortion: a case study on 23 August 1944', *Chaietele Equinox* 1 (2001), 123–133.

[15] Five authors resumed the theme in their works: Adrian Cioflâncă, 'A grammar of exculpation in communist historiography: distortion of the history of the Holocaust under Ceausescu' *Romanian Journal of Political Science* IV (2/2004), 29–46; Radu Ioanid, *The Sword of the Archangel. Fascist Ideology in Romania* (New York, Columbia University Press, 1990), 1–24; Armin Heinen, *Legiunea Arhangelul Mihail, mişcare socială şi organizaţie politică. O contribuţie la problema fascismului international* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2006) [or. ed. R. Oldenbourg Verlag, München, 1986]; L. Boia, *A historiografical controversy: the jews of Romania during the second world war*, in *Istorie şi ideologie*, ed. M. Dobre (2003), available on the website of the University of Bucharest at the address http://ebooks.unibuc.ro/istorie/ideologie/20.htm.

[16] The most important contribution is from Cristian Roiban, *Ideologie şi istoriografie: Protocronismul* (Timişoara: Editura Universităţii de Vest, 2014); see also Steliu Lambru, 'Note despre protocronismul românesc', *Studii şi Materiale de Istorie Contemporană* 10 (2011).

[17] Deletant, 'Rewriting the Past: Trends in Contemporary Romanian Historiography', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, XIV (1/1991), 68–86.

[18] Simion Gheorghiu, 'Politică şi istorie în tratarea relaţiilor româno-ruse/sovietice. 1947–1989. Studiu de caz: istoriografia română', *Studii şi Materiale de Istorie Contemporană* 7 (2008).

after 1989, in an intense dialogue between the scholarly disciplines, in an attempt to find a suitable canon to interpret recent national history.

2.2 Defining the narrative canon on communist Romania: the early years

Irina Livezeanu has described the post-1989 historiography in Romania as affected by poverty. The regime change meant freedom from strict control and censorship, but 'by itself, this state of negative freedom has not, and could not have, transformed the ruins of the old communist-nationalist historiography of the Ceaușescu era'.[19] Cristina and Dragoș Petrescu have indicated the main reasons for the poverty of post-1989 historiography regarding Romanian post-1945 history as; first, the colonization of the subjects by poorly-trained propagandists during the communist times; second, the absence of a historiographical canon – and even of a chronology – other than the Party one for the interpretation of contemporary history, while for historiography on ancient, medieval and modern history the scholarly community could rely on several major works by A. D. Xenopol, N. Iorga, etc.; and, third, the restricted access to archival sources. To these causes, Iordachi and Trencsényi added that the traditionalist historians' efforts were still aimed at enlarging 'the national-communist canon, en-riching it by publishing collections of documents and by tackling previously neglected or avoided topics'.[20]

Once the Ceaușescu regime had fallen, many national and international scholars in history and the social sciences started to publish analyses of the relationship between politics and historiography in communist Romania, creating for the first time a scholarly historiographical canon[21] for the study of

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[19] Irina Livezeanu, *The Poverty of Post-Communist Contemporary History in Romania*, Title VIII Program – The National Council for Eurasian and East European Research, Washington, 2006, available at http://www.ucis.pitt.edu/nceeer/2003-816-08-2-Livezeanu.pdf; retrieved on 21st February 2015, iii.

[20] Balázs Trencsényi, Constantin Iordachi, 'In Search for a Usable Past: The Question of National Identity in Romanian Studies, 1990–2000', *East European Politics and Societies* (17/2003), 415–453; 428.

[21] Cristina and Dragoș Petrescu, Mastering vs. Coming to Terms with the Past: A Critical Analysis of Post-Communist Romanian Historiography, in Narratives Unbound. Historical Studies in Post-Communist Eastern Europe, eds. Sorin Antohi, Balázs Trencsényi, Péter Apor (Budapest-New York: Central European University Press, 2007), 311–408; 353–355.

the communist era. It is worth noting that, among those pioneers of the historical study of Romanian communism, none were at the same time contemporary historians *and* had contemporary Romanian history as their main research interest.[22] For example, *National Ideology under Socialism* was published in 1991 by American cultural anthropologist Katherine Verdery.

Verdery's work constituted a thorough enquiry into the use of national ideology during Ceaușescu's times and constituted, at that time, the major contribution to the understanding of the interconnection between scholarship and the regime. Verdery's narrative is aimed at showing how the national discourse was a struggle between different competing groups of intellectuals aimed at redefining it in a struggle for hegemony. This monograph was certainly one of the most innovative accounts of Romanian culture under communism, and provides a very solid understanding of the changes in cultural imperatives originating in certain political needs, but the aim of the volume was also to question the direct and unidirectional link between political propaganda needs and cultural expressions. It aims, in fact, at defining the modalities of control that the Romanian regime, defined as weak and in need of legitimacy among the population, needed to establish and foster its power: from control and repression during the Stalinist times, to control and co-option during national-communism.[23] Once the

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[22] One example is Dennis Deletant, with his 1991 contribution *Rewriting the Past,* cit. Originally interested in the Romanian language as a curiosity, Deletant travelled for the first time to Romania in the summer of 1965 on an exchange program of the British-Romanian Cultural Agreement. In London, he taught the Romanian language and medieval history [see, for example, Dennis Deletant, 'A Survey of Rumanian Presses and Printing in the Sixteenth Century', *The Slavonic and East European Review*, 53 (131/1975), 161–174; idem, 'Rumanian Presses and Printing in the Seventeenth Century', *The Slavonic and East European Review*, 60, (4/1982), 481–499; idem, 'Genoese, Tatars and Rumanians at the Mouth of the Danube in the Fourteenth Century', *The Slavonic and East European Review*, 62, (4/1984), 511–530; idem, 'Moldavia between Hungary and Poland, 1347–1412', *The Slavonic and East European Review*, 64/2, 189–211]. Deletant was not often requested to comment on the political situation in Romania, but the regime's documents show the surveillance on him was discontinued from 1972 (only to be resumed in 1977). At the beginning of the 1980s he gave two courses on Romanian history. He later entered into contact with many of the dissident camps (among them intellectuals like Marin Preda, and politicians like Corneliu Coposu), making him politically involved. Source: Interview with Dennis Deletant, April 4, 2013, available on the Cornell University website, http://hdl.handle.net/1813/33423. One incursion into contemporary history before 1989 was made by Deletant, who was requested to do it, for the publication of a document in idem, 'Archie Gibson's Prayer for Peace, Bucharest, 1944', *The Slavonic and East European Review* 64 (4/1986), 571–574.
[23] Verdery, *National Ideology under Socialism*, 83–86.

intellectuals were co-opted in the construction of a national ideology, different competing groups struggled over the definition of the nation, defined by Verdery as a discursive field used instrumentally by the Party.[24]

The "portion" of culture that concerns this study, historiography, was one of the most important instruments for the construction of popular legitimacy, being almost entirely dedicated to national history.[25] Verdery dedicated an entire chapter to the modalities of history production in communist Romania.[26] Verdery defined national ideology as a discursive field, of which historiography was part. The actors in this struggle are distinguished by the audience[27] by their political status (which position they occupied in the Party and academic ranks) and their cultural/scientific authority (the professional competence they had). This struggle was fundamental, Verdery claims, in the quest for positions and resources.

Verdery's results are certainly seminal: she demonstrates that the Party had virtually no control over historical narratives, and therefore attributed considerable power to the intellectuals. Since the intellectuals seem to lead the cultural discourse, in Verdery's narrative the Party and its plans assume less importance. Despite this limitation, which after more than 20 years has affected the volume's hegemony,[28] Verdery's monograph remains one of the

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[24] 'How was Romanian identity represented […] these images are largely discursive, offered in politically relevant public discourse'. Ibid., 8. Far from seeing the field in terms of the dichotomy "Party vs. intellectuals", she considered national ideology as a discourse used instrumentally by the Party, 'forced […] under pressure from others, especially intellectuals', who 'were drawing upon personal concerns and traditions of inquiry that made the Nation a continuing and urgent reality for them despite official interdictions'. Ibid., 222.

[25] And therefore 'it was of interest chiefly to Romanians and of maximum use to a Romanian state', Verdery, *National Ideology under Socialism*, 222.

[26] Ibid., 215–255.

[27] 'Cognizant public that is, building an audience (or maintaining one already in existence) that recognizes and supports the definitions of value upon which the cultural status of a given group of intellectuals rests. […] the "democratizing objective […] should not be confused – especially in this case – with a de-professionalization of the domain in question; rather, it would increase the chance that the public would know enough to acknowledge a given claim to professional competence, granting their attention to that claim in preference of some other'. Verdery, 294; see also ibid., 142–145.

[28] The most recent, but more open, criticism is in C. Vasile, *Viață intelectuală și artistică în primul deceniu al regimului Ceaușescu. 1965–1974*, 20–22. Vasile considers that the recent scholarly works, but also memoirs and archival documents, have invalidated the conclusions of Verdery regarding the instrumental use of nationalism by the Party in order to attract the intellectuals. Despite what Verdery concluded, claims Vasile, the Party did use nationalism instrumentally in order to attract the intellectuals, and national identity was actually of minor importance in defining the dynamics between

most penetrating analyses of the practices that permeated the cultural field during communist times. Historically, it gave an understanding that contributed to the theoretical and methodological enrichment of the post-1989 Romanian analysis of historiography, when the formerly repressed cultural dissidents were allowed to take part in the discipline by promoting the return to professional values. The book was soon translated into Romanian (1994) by Humanitas Publishing, the most important of the newly founded publishing houses that chose to promote the values of the former dissidents.[29] Alina Tudor Pavelescu wrote in 2009 a well-informed follow-up on this topic in her doctoral dissertation, following Verdery's theoretical bases.[30] Both Verdery's and Pavelescu's works are important means to understand the usage of national ideology by the regime, and the mediating role covered by the intellectuals in elaborating the new, national-communist ideology.

After 1989, historians also played a significant part in the study of communist Romania. During the time of the communist regime, Keith Hitchins had already contributed to the discipline by founding the first academic journal dedicated to Romanian studies (*Rumanian Studies*). He initially focused on the question of national identity in modern and early modern Romania,[31] producing a wide survey of Romanian historiography. One of Hitchins's main points is that the quest for historiography at the end of the communist regime was still aimed at defining the national identity and the

political power and intellectuals. See also Cristian Vasile, 'Unirea Principatelor Sau Despre Nationalism Comunism şi Intelectuali', *lapunkt.ro*, January 24th, 2013, http://www.lapunkt.ro/2013/01/24/unirea-principatelor-sau-despre-nationalism-comunism-si-intelectuali/ See also C. Vasile, 'Funcţionarea Uniunii Scriitorilor în comunism', *Apostrof* XXII (3/2011), http://www.revista-apostrof.ro/articole.php?id=1399

[29] Humanitas was created by the will of Education minister and former dissident Andrei Pleşu from the remains of Editura Politică, the Party political publishing house.

[30] Alina Tudor Pavelescu, *Le Conducător, le Parti et le Peuple. Le discours nationaliste comme discours de légitimation dans la Roumanie de Ceauşescu (1965–1989)* Ph. D. dissertation (Paris: Ecole Doctorale de Sciences Po, 2009).

[31] Hitchins published several volumes on the modern and early modern history of Romania throughout the 1970s and 80s; among the most relevant: Keith Hitchins, *The Romanian National Movement in Transylvania, 1780–1849* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1969); idem, *Orthodoxy and Nationality: Andrei Şaguna and the Rumanians of Transylvania, 1846–1873* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1977); idem, *The Idea of Nation. The Romanians of Transylvania, 1691–1849* (Bucharest: Editura Ştiinţifică şi Enciclopedică, 1985).

future development of Romania.[32] Implicitly, his writing suggests that a deeper understanding of the relationship between historiography and politics could be found by investigating the role of the communist regime.[33] He also pointed out that there were clear gaps in the scholarship on communist Romania: 'a comprehensive bibliography on the Romanian workers' movement does not exist […], a biographic dictionary of the Romanian communists does not exist […], a general history of the Romanian Communist Party does not exist'.[34] His main contribution is the creation of a multidisciplinary approach for the study of Romanian historiography. In creating this, Hitchins acknowledged several secondary works of literature from disciplines other than history: the aforementioned cultural anthropology cornerstone by Verdery and, among others, monographs by two authors who during communist times worked explicitly on the Romanian communist regime: Kenneth Jowitt and Michael Shafir, who were not historians by education, but political scientists.

After defending his doctoral thesis on post-Stalinist Eastern Europe at the University of Berkley, Kenneth Jowitt lived in Romania during the communist period and continued to study contemporary Romanian society.[35] Political scientist Michael Shafir was involved both in scholarly and political ways in the analysis of the Ceauşescu regime: from Israel and Germany, he published several essays on the regime's cultural policies and the dissidents,[36] while at the same time collaborating actively with the Romanian Unit Research of Radio Free Europe.[37] Jowitt and Shafir's pioneering works were taken into consideration by the national history-writers after the fall of the regime.

During the 1990s, a great number of prominent historians contributed to shaping the discourse around the general relationship between politics and

[32] Keith Hitchins, 'Romania', in *American Historical Review* 97, (4/1992), 1064–1083; 1083.
[33] Ibid., 1080.
[34] Keith Hitchins, *Mit şi realitatea în istoriografia românească* (Bucharest: Editura Enciclopedică, 1997), 216–218.
[35] Resulted in Kenneth Jowitt, *Revolutionary Breakthroughs and National Development: The Case of Romania* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971).
[36] See for example: Michael Shafir, 'Who Is Paul Goma?', *Index on Censorship*, 7 (1/1978), 29–39; idem, 'Literature and Politics in communist Romania' *Proza* (51–53/1982), 7–13; idem, 'Political Culture, Intellectual Dissent and Intellectual Consent: The Case of Romania', *Orbis* 27 (2/1983), 393–420.
[37] As analyst in 1965–1967, since 1985 as deputy director, in 1988–1989 as chief director, in 1991–1994 as senior analyst.

historiography, for instance Alexandru Zub and Şerban Papacostea. The latter, a medievalist and since 1990 the director of the Nicoale Iorga Institute, studied the general functioning of history-writing as ancillary to political power, giving a general overview on the subject and insisting on the vast impact that the cult of Ceauşescu had had for the history discipline.[38] Alexandru Zub, in a series of articles that acknowledged Verdery's legacy, indicated the tension between compromise and resistance among historians in the dealings with the regime. Zub focused on the early Stalinist period and on the eighties, and therefore left large temporal and analytical areas untouched.[39] His main contribution is to have provided the field of a work of historiography that follows methodologically Georgescu's *Politica și Istorie*, opening the national scholarly debate about the recent past of the profession. These first efforts to investigate the relationship between politics and historiography are still nowadays works of reference. A decade after, the historians close to the Party have chosen to contribute to the topic publishing their memoires (see next chapter).

Subsequently, an entirely new field of enquiry was gradually shaped and defined, much due to the great interest that intellectuals and the general public were developing for the deconstruction of the prevailing myths in national historiography, but also as part of the denunciations made by scholars of persons and institutions compromised by their collaboration with the previous regime.[40]

2.3 The renewal of cultural memory

French historian Catherine Durandin has noted that in the early 1990s, the Romanian government was still endorsing the official commemorations of the former regime, while the history articles published in the newspapers of

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[38] Şerban Papacostea, 'Captive Clio: Romanian Historiography under Communist Rule', *European History Quarterly* 26 (2/1996), 181–208; this article had a higher impact in the international scholarly community, and was also translated into Romanian (in 1998). Şerban Papacostea also dedicated another article to the subject, specifically on the role of Andrei Oţetea as director of the Iorga Institute: Papacostea, 'Andrei Oţetea director al Institutul de Istorie Nicolae Iorga' *Revista Istorica* V (7–8/1994), 629–637.
[39] Alexandru Zub collected all these articles into a volume: Alexandru Zub, *Orizont închis. Istoriografia româna sub dictatură* (Iaşi: Institutul European, 2000).
[40] See, i.e., Ştefan Andreescu, 'De ce nu vrei să te retragi, domnule Popişteanu?' *Revista 22*, 16 February 1990, 9.

the opposition instead focused on the national heritage from the interwar period, and denunciations of Stalinist crimes, both themes used substantially in criticism against the government: '*la force de l'histoire est fait de la feblesse du politique*'.[41] At the same time, temporal proximity still constituted an obstacle to a deeper analysis of the Ceausescu regime, since prominent members of society protected themselves and their reputations at a time when new social boundaries and hierarchies were being established.

Not until the early 2000s was the Romanian national debate marked by a renewed interest in historical studies; history was increasingly used as a tool in the political debate. In 2005, prime minister Călin Popescu Tăriceanu authorized the creation of the Institute for the Investigation of Communist Crimes in Romania under the guidance of former dissident Marius Oprea. The Institute was not connected to the Romanian Academy, the official academic institution: in fact it quite clearly opposed the Academy's orientation. The Institute also harboured several critically-minded intellectuals and historians who had been ostracized from public life in the 1990s.[42] The *Annales* of the Institute, starting in 2006, published several articles focusing on the national-communist brand of history as a form of propaganda, and more specifically on the relationship between the history discipline and politics in communist Romania; a theme that was now more possible to explore due to the partial opening of the archives.

The history-writing during the communist period was now highlighted at national and international levels by the proceedings of two official history commissions, clearly influencing the public, cultural, and political debate: The International Commission for the Study of the Holocaust in Romania, and the Presidential Commission for the Study of the Communist Dictatorship in Romania.

Informally acknowledged as the "Wiesel Commission" since its chair was Nobel Prize Laureate Elie Wiesel, the International Commission for the Study of the Holocaust in Romania was established by president Ion Iliescu in 2003 after the international clamour generated by his attempts to minimize the Romanian role in the Holocaust. Despite criticism from

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[41] Catherine Durandin. 'Roumanie, retour à l'histoire et révisions' *Relations internationals* (67/1991): 295–298.
[42] Stefano Bottoni, 'Memorie negate, verità di stato. Lustrazione e commissioni storiche nella Romania postcomunista', *Quaderni Storici* 128 (2/2008), 403–431, 421.

scholarly quarters,[43] the commission managed to highlight the issue of Holocaust memory in Romania[44] and influence the current public debate. It also managed to withstand attacks from anti-Semitic and denialist quarters, who were also to some extent supported by part of the academic establishment.[45] The most significant achievement of this commission, for the present purpose, was the analysis of the national-communist historiographical narratives and their modalities of exculpation when dealing with the Holocaust, a text written by Adrian Cioflâncă.[46]

The Presidential Commission for the Study of the Communist Dictatorship in Romania was established by president Traian Băsescu, who appointed as chair Vladimir Tismăneanu, a Romanian-born political scientist who since the 1980s, and based at different American universities, had conducted research on the political history of the communist regime.[47] Tismaneanu chose to call historians of a younger generation his co-workers in the commission. The resulting synthesis (*Raport final*, 2006) analysed the Communist Party and the repressive dimension, but also society, economy and culture during the communist period. It generated an intense political and scholarly debate in Romania between 2006 and 2007. According to Michal Shafir, this report was necessary to 'put an end to the subjectivity of memory' on the communist regime.[48]

Both commissions mainly aimed at instituting a State-endorsed memory, stressing among other topics the role of the communist era historians in producing a historiography that was ancillary to political power, and which

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[43] According to Valentin Stoian, 'preponderantly, the *Final Report* is a work of narrative rather than a work of analysis' 'being inspired more by authors like Jean Ancel and Lya Benjamin, than by historians supporting a functionalist interpretation like Radu Ioanid and Dennis Deletant who already wrote about it'; in Valentin Stoian, 'The Final Report on the Romanian Holocaust in the Light of the Intentionalist-Functionalist Debate', *Holocaust. Studii și cercetări* (4/2001), 127–141; quotes from 141 and abstract.

[44] The general results of the commission are available here: International Commission for the Study of the Holocaust in Romania, *Raport Final*, 2004, available on http://yad-vashem.org.il/about_yad/what_new/data_whats_new/report1.html. The official summary in English is available at http://www.ushmm.org/research/center/presentations/features/details/2005-03-10/pdf/english/executive_summary.pdf.

[45] See Shafir, 'Unacademic Academics, Holocaust Deniers and Trivializers in Post-communist Romania', *Nationalities Papers* 42 (6/2014), 942–964.

[46] Adrian Cioflâncă, 'A "Grammar of Exculpation"'.

[47] Tismaneanu's most important contribution remains Tismăneanu, *Stalinism for All Seasons. A Political History of Romanian Communism* (Berkley: University of California Press, 2003), which indicated the presence in contemporary Romanian politics of several power structures and high-ranked personalities of the former regime.

[48] Quoted in Bottoni, 'Memorie negate', 421.

contributed to attracting both general and scholarly attention and interest in the topic.

2.4 Beyond narratives. Historiography on politics and historical research in communist Romania

Once the field of enquiry was defined, from the mid-1990s several historians have dedicated their efforts to researching specific case studies related to the establishment of communist rule. Many have focused on the consequences for the historians and the history discipline during the early Stalinist period. A general and synthetic approach has been adopted by Victor Cojocaru, who indicated the institutional and theoretical aspects that permitted the implementation of Stalinist historiography: its institutional base: the closing of rival institutions and journals, the opening of new pro-Soviet research institutes, the implementation of censorship, and the breaking of cultural contacts with the West. A new and mandatory methodology of historical research was introduced: dialectical and historical materialism. Soviet historiography was proscribed as a sole point of reference, while historical work was required to be made in collective forms.[49]

Cojocaru and other historians started to research the early Stalinist period from several different angles: both at a general level[50] and concerning specific institutions and groups that were controlled[51] or purged[52] from the

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[49] Victor Cojocaru, 'Modelarea Ideologica a istoriografiei – baze istituţionale şi metodologice', *Analele Sighet* (6/1998), 571–574.

[50] See, for example, Gabriel Catalan, 'Instituţii, practice şi personalităţi la începuturile sovietizării culturii şi istoriografie româneşti', *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie "G. Bariţ" din Cluj-Napoca* (44/2005), 439–462; Ştefan Bosomitu, 'Planificare – implementare – control. Apariţia şi dezvoltarea aparatului de propagandă communist în România. 1944–1950', *Anuarul Institutului de Investigare a Crimelor Comunismului în România*, (III/2008), 19–48; Catalan, 'Istoriografia română sub impactul modelului sovietic (1947–1955)', *Anuarul Institutului de Investigare a Crimelor Comunismului în România* (IV/2009), 19–38.

[51] Liviu Pleşa, 'Metode represive folosite de Securitate pentru controlul istoricilor clujeni (1945–1965)', *Anuarul Institutului de Investigare a Crimelor Comunismului în România* (IV/2009), 39–56.

[52] See, for example, Gabriel Catalan, 'Institutul de istorie şi filosofie al Academiei RPR (1947–1951)', *Xenopoliana*, (3–4/1998), 141–152. Constantin Şerban, 'Epurarea cadrelor didactice de la Facultatea de Istorie din Bucureşti, 1945–1952', *Arhive Totalitarismului*, (4/1998), 51–75; Ovidiu Bozgan, 'Din istoricul Facultăţii de Istorie din Bucureşti în perioda 1948–1960', *Analele Universitaţii Bucureşti – Seria Istorie* (XXIX/1990), 93–103; Stelian Mândruţ, 'Istoricii clujeni "epurati" în anul 1948', *Analele Sighet* (6/1998), 565–571.

historiographical field. From the mid-1990s the main attention focused on the figure of Mihail Roller, the leading Stalinizer of Romanian historiography,[53] who was designated as the 'historiographical dictator' by Șerban Papacostea.[54]

A major work on the cultural politics of the Gheorghiu-Dej period has been written by Cristian Vasile, who analysed some aspects of particular importance for the understanding of the Party propaganda apparatus. Vasile studied the institutional changes, the financial and administrative aspects of cultural politics, and the role of the publishing houses and book distribution; however, he did not address directly the history-writing community,[55] but rather the Party organizations constituting its political and administrative environment – and therefore, I would argue, fundamental to it. A specific focus on the institutional aspects of university life was adopted by Jan Sadlak, who wrote in 1990 a very important monograph on the Romanian educational system between academic mission, economic demands and political control.[56] Sadlak gave the first relevant depiction of the university system and of its institutional level and regimentation in the communist regime. In 2007 Mihai Dinu Gheorghiu published *The Intellectuals in the Field of Power. Morphologies and Social Trajectories*, in which the intellectuals are considered as an elite within the Party. Gheorghiu chose to focus on the modality of formation and reproduction of the intellectual elite in the German Democratic Republic and Romania during the communist period, contributing a depiction of the context in which many of the historians and propagandists of the present study were educated.[57] Gheorghiu analysed the field of power and the trajectories of the individuals

[53] On the impact of Mihail Roller: Liviu Dandarea, 'Extirparea Ideologică a memoriei naționale prin falsificarea masivă a trecutului istoric. Experimentul Stalinist în variant Roller: "Istoria RPR" în ediții successive (sept. 1947, iun. 1948)', *Analele Sighet* (6/1998), 574–588; Aurel Pentelescu, 'Mihail Roller și stalinizarea istoriografiei române în anii postbelici', *Analele Sighet* (6/1998), 588–603; Liviu Pleșa, 'Mihail Roller și stalinizarea istoriografiei românești', *Annales Universitatis Apuliensis – Series Historica*, 10 (1/2007), 165–177.
[54] Papacostea, *Captive Clio*, 190.
[55] Cristian Vasile, *Politice culturale comuniste în tîmpul regimului Gheorghiu-Dej* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2011).
[56] Jan Sadlak, *Higher Education in Romania 1860–1990: Between Academic Mission, Economic Demands and Political Control* (Buffalo: State University of New Work/University of Buffalo, 1990). See also Sadlak, 'The Use and Abuse of the University: Higher Education in Romania 1860–1990', *Minerva* 29 (2/1991), 195–225; 203–204.
[57] Mihai Dinu Gheorghiu, Intelectualii în cîmpul puterii. Morfologii și traiectorii sociale (Iași: Polirom, 2007).

within it, and his work is clearly of great use for my present study of historians and communist politics.[58]

2.5 General histories on politics and historiography in communist Romania

The relationship between politics and historiography during the early communist period, 1948 to 1964, has received some interest from historians during the last decade. Four general histories have been published since 2003, the first two written by Florin Müller and Andi Mihalache.

Müller describes in the beginning of his book all the problems and restrictions he encountered while conducing this research, from the restricted access to archival documents to the absence of a relevant bibliography. Müller noted that the institutions for history education and history-writing during the communist regime received no attention from the scholarly community.[59] Müller makes visible the complex game that was going on, focusing also on the political and ideological biographies of propagandists and historians. For the present purpose, Müller's contribution is limited in terms of time-frame, but offers on the other hand some new information on ISISP and its interaction with its main organ of reference, the Propaganda Department or Section, and similar Party institutions: the "A.A. Zhdanov" School, the "Ştefan Gheorghiu" School and also some important non-Party institutions, primarily the History Institute of the Romanian Academy.

In contrast, the work of Mihalache is primarily aimed at analysing the historical discourse as a means of negotiating the symbolic capital between different actors. His main interest is to find an internal coherence in the dominating discourse elaborated within the history discipline, and at periodizing of the ruptures and discontinuities that characterised it. Using discourse analysis, the author has caught the communist period historians

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[58] To these two studies should be added Petre Opriş, 'Tentativă de fraudă intelectuală la nivelul nomenclaturii dejiste. Doctori în ştiinţe, cu orice preţ!', *Dosarele Istoriei*, IX, 12 (100/2004), 11–15. The article addresses an attempt by major propagandists in the mid-1950s to falsify the academic doctoral process.
[59] Florin Müller, *Politică şi istoriografie în România*, 10: 'the institutions […] are insufficiently analysed. Systematic studies on university life, on the publishing houses and on the Party schools, on the scientific societies, on the social system in which the graduates were integrated, on the family relationships and on the transferring of symbolical power (prestige, influence, extra-professional motivations) do not exist'.

in the act of reordering the past in accordance with contemporary politics, while considering the historians as mediators between different collective memories and modes of national identity. The declaration of independence by the Romanian regime against the Soviet diktats in 1964 was, according to Mihalache, beneficial for the return of liberalization in historiographical discursive practices, and represented an opportunity, rather than a cause, for changes in the historical narratives: 'each one [of the historians] interpreted the moment in function of their own priority, many historians maintaining their old clichés, while others managed to write [a kind of history] difficult to conceive in the period 1948–1965'.[60]

Both Müller's and Mihalache's monographs constituted a breakthrough in this field of research, the former attempting to write a synthesis on the 1944–1964 period, the latter using the theoretical elements of discourse analysis on historiography. Mihalache thereby allowed contemporary readers to see beyond the merely factual narratives that predominated within the history discipline during the communist period, highlighting instead the rhetorical practices that regimented the historiography. Both Müller and Mihalache managed to compensate for their restricted access to archival sources, but neither of them studied more closely the institutions where the historical narratives were actually produced.

After 2010, two new general histories were written on politics and historiography. Stan Stoica produced the extremely well-documented monograph *Istoriografia românească între imperativele ideologice și rigorile profesionale, 1953–1965*.[61] He demonstrated the link between the political activities of the regime and their eventual effects on the historian community, providing a clear and useful temporal periodization comprehending the de-Sovietization after the death of Stalin, the reaction to it by the Romanian regime through a subsequent series of repressions directed against historians, and finally the start of the new national course of historiography in 1959. Stoica's work is commendable for its chronological clarity and solid archival references, and it provides valuable guidelines for subsequent researchers.

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[60] Andi Mihalache, *Istorie și practici discursive în România "democrat-populară"* (Bucharest: Albatros, 2003), 306.
[61] Stan Stoica, *Istoriografia românească între imperativele ideologice și rigorile profesionale, 1953–1965* (Bucharest: Meronia, 2012).

Another recent contribution is the unpublished dissertation by Cristian Bogdan Iacob.[62] Iacob's work is clearly innovative from a theoretical and methodological point of view. Attempting to bypass the classic contra-position "Party vs. historians", B. C. Iacob considers that the rehabilitation of tradition and the co-option of the intellectuals beginning in 1955 was a process that had cumulative effects on the political discourse of the Party. By the mid-1960s the official discourse had combined the products of history-writing and the regime's image of the Romanian nation – forming a new meta-narrative of the socialist nation. The creation of this new his-toriographical paradigm, which would continue and expand during the sub-sequent Ceausescu regime (a period unfortunately not covered by Iacob), was made possible by a constant dialogue between historians and Party ideologues, and is more understandable once the historical narratives are considered as a product of their specific academic context. The cultural revolution fostered by the Party, Iacob maintains, was transformed into a national "scientific" revolution containing a gradual process of growing opposition among the historians against Mihal Roller's hegemony in the field. The Party had a very active role in this process, creating new institu-tions, mobilising resources for large-scale projects, and instigating purges to reaffirm the Party line among the community.[63]

Stoica's and Bogdan's works offer only very short descriptions of how these processes continued during the Ceausescu period, when the official narrative standardisation of the socialist nation was fixed on the proclaimed

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[62] Cristian Bogdan Iacob, *Stalinism, Historians, and the Nation: History-production under communism in Romania (1955–1966)*, Ph. D. Dissertation (Budapest: Central European University, 2011).

[63] Ibid., 528–529: 'Three phenomena defined […] this state (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"[…]; second, the Party continuously pursued policies of better integrating historical research within the system of planned science. The front was restructured by […] institutionalization and […] mobilising with the purpose of achieving "great scientific projects" […]. And third, these changes took place under the circumstances of the […] reaffirmation of orthodoxy within the epistemic community […]. […] These three phenomena merged into several crucial develop-ments: a) the formation of a polycentric historical front led more often than not by individuals whose first epistemic socialization had been in pre-1945 times, but who also fully internalized the discursive, behavioural, and organizational codes of Marxist-Leninist planned science; b) the selective rehabilitation of [the pre-communist] tradition […]; c) the RWP consolidated and expanded a system of control and co-option that […] result[ed in] the continuation of the effort of self-Sovietizing Romanian science'.

[64] See, for example, M. Shafir, 'Unacademic academics', cit.

"four pillars" of Romanian history (ancientness, continuity, unity, and independence). Clearly, the dialogue (Iacob's term) and coexistence between historians and propagandists continued also after the new historiographical canon had been established.

A history on the relationship between politics and historical research in Ceauşescu's regime therefore still remains to be written, probably because many of the historians of the communist times are still present in the Romanian academic world, and a deeper analysis of the Ceauşescu era would probably imply a judgement on the work of several colleagues.[64] However, some contributions have touched on adjacent areas. For example, Cristian Vasile dedicated a volume to the cultural life of the first nine years of the Ceausescu regime, including a specific study on the foundation of the National History Museum.[65] A few specific case studies have been dedicated to the organizational system of communist cultural politics,[66] to specific traits of official ideology,[67] or to the control and repression of the historians under the surveillance of the Securitate.[68] In recent years, the opening of archives have allowed a young generation of historians to explore more fully the history of cultural institutions during communism,[69] to write the first

[65] Cristian Vasile, *Viață intelectuală și artistică în primul deceniu al regimului Ceauşescu. 1965–1974* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2015).

[66] For example, Corina Pălăşan, '"Organizarea ştiinţifică" a societăţii sau ştiinţele sociale în România primilor ani al regimului Ceauşescu. Cazul judeţul Iaşi (1970–1972)', *Anuarul Institutului de Investigare a Crimelor Comunismului în România* (III/2008), 119–154.

[67] Alexandra Tomiţă, 'Cântând afonia puterii. Cultul personalităţii în România ceauşistă', *Anuarul Institutului de Investigare a Crimelor Comunismului în România* (IV/2009), 123–142.

[68] Ioan Opriş, *Istoricii şi Securitatea* (Bucharest: Editura Enciclopedică, Vol. I (2004) and II (2006)). The work collects several individual cases of historians, historians of art, archaeologists, and ethnologists kept under control and/or repressed by the communist regime. It is worth noting that none of the case studies concern ISISP historians, but concern instead many of those who dealt with them as colleagues from other non-Party institutions.

[69] For example Ioana Macrea-Toma, *Privilighenţia. Instituţii literare în comunismul românesc*, (Cluj-Napoca: Casa Cărţii de Ştiinţă, 2009); the thesis of the book is that political power controlled the writers with the Union of the Artists, which monopolized all existing resources; see also Liliana Corobca, *Controlul cărţii. Censura literaturii în regimul communist din România* (Iaşi: Polirom, 2014); the book presents the history of censorship through the history of its institution and, after its dismissal in 1977, its generalization in each and every cultural institution. On the institution and practices of censorship, see also Agness Kiss, *Censorship between Ambiguity and Effectiveness: Rules, Trust, and Informal Practices in Romania (1949–1989)* CEU dissertation (Budapest: Central European University, 2014). Mostly relevant for my empirical case study is the

biographies of communist intellectuals,[70] and to conduct the first oral history interviews with historians of the communist times.[71]

2.6 Conclusions

In conclusion, scholarly research on the relationship between historio-graphy and politics in communist Romania began in the Cold War era with three monographs and two articles written between 1961 and 1983, all focusing on the narratives produced. The field was redefined after 1989 when, in the absence of a scholarly standard for the study of the communist regime, historians tended to rely on the analyses made by social scientists when sketching their first accounts on the topic. In the 1990s, the first specific case studies emerged – they were primarily aimed at analysing the Stalinist period, perhaps due to the temporal closeness to the Ceausescu era – and the persistence of many of its elements and main figures in post-1989 Romania. After the year 2000, the first major monograph on the con-nections between historiography and politics in the Gheorghiu-Dej era (1948–1964) appeared. During the first decade of the 2000s, new research centres and two historical commissions provided new resources and angles for historical research. In very recent years, the gradual opening of archives has made it possible for researchers to analyse various aspects of the

essay by Simina Bădică, 'The Revolutionary Museum: Curating the Museum of Communist Party History in Romania (1948–1958)', *Historical Yearbook* X (2013), 95–109; specific research on the censorship on history has been written by Ion Zainea: Ion Zainea, *Cenzura istoriei, istorie cenzurată* (Oradea: Editura Universității din Oradea, 2006); idem, *Istoriografia româna şi cenzura comunistă (1966–1977)* (Oradea, Editura Universității din Oradea, 2010); idem, *Istoricii şi cenzura comunistă (1966–1977)*, in *Destine individuale si collective în comunism* eds. Cosmin Budeancă, Florentin Olteanu (Iaşi, Polirom, 2013).
[70] See Lavinia Betea, *Lucrețiu Pătrăşcanu. Moartea unui lider comunist* (Bucharest: Curtea Veche, 2001); Ştefan Bosomitu, *Miron Constantinescu. O biografie* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2014); see also Cristian Vasile, 'Biografiile "dictatorilor culturali" (Iosif Chişinevschi, Leonte Răutu, Dumitru Popescu). Surse şi prejudecăţi', *Studii şi Materiale Istorie Contemporană* (8/2009); Vladimir Tismăneanu, Cristian Vasile, *Perfectul acrobat. Leonte Răutu, măştile răului* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2008); Vasile Vese, 'Constantin Daicoviciu (1898–1973) şi cercetarea istoriei contemporane', *Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai – Historia* (1–2/1998), 145–148; Ionuţ Ţene, 'Istoricul şi rectorul Constantin Daicoviciu în percepţia universitară clujeană', *Anuarul de Istoria Orala – Institutul de Istoria Orala – Universitatea "Babeş Bolyai" Cluj-Napoca* (XIII/2013), 223–236.
[71] See, for example, Felician Velimirovici, 'Romanian Historians under Communism. An Oral Inquiry', *Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai – Historia* 56 (2/2011), 116–137.

communist regime based on solid first-hand documentation, where previous studies were primarily based on secondary sources and oral evidence.

The present study aims to analyse the complex dynamics of ISISP, a historical institute closely tied to the Party, using the Institute's recently released archival documents. So far, the only studies available on ISISP are a description of the ISISP archive, written by Gabriel Catalan, and available on the website of the Romanian National Archives,[72] and a dictionary entry written by Florian Tănăsescu, which describes the aim of the Institute and its main institutional changes, relying on encyclopaedias and journals from the communist period.[73] Those two studies are the first attempts to trace the chronology of ISISP. However, a scholarly and in-depth study that considers ISISP as a field of the interaction between the political requirements of the regime and the historiographical standard performed by the Institute's activists and historians is still to be made. Such a study will contribute to creating a deeper understanding of historiography and of its mode of production, and will question the over-simplifying dichotomies between historians and propagandists, and between Party dictates and historical scholarship.

[72] Gabriel Catalan, *Fondul ISISP*, http://www.arhivelenationale.ro/index.php?lan =0&page=122. An updated version of the description, namely the presentation of the collection of photographs of the Institute, was written by Catalan for the project *Fototeca online a comunismului românesc*, endorsed by The Romanian National Archives and the Institute for the Investigation of the Communist Crimes in Romania, 2012. This new description also contains partial archival references to the ISISP fund and a short bibliography of monographs and reviews edited by ISISP; Gabriel Catalan, *Institutul De Studii Istorice Şi Social-Politice. Fototeca – Prezentarea părţii structurale*, http://gabriel catalan.wordpress.com/2012/02/29/institutul-de-studii-istorice-si-social-politice-fototeca-prezentarea-partii-structurale/
[73] Dan Cătănuş (ed.), *România 1945–1989. Enciclopedia regimului comunist. Instituţii de partid, de stat, obşteşti şi cooperatiste* (Bucharest: Institutul Naţional Pentru Studiul Totalitarismului, 2012), 311–317, entry 'Institutul de Studii Istorice şi Social-Politice de pe lângă CC al PCR' (author: Florian Tănăsescu).

Sources and source criticism

The text that is understood historically is forced to abandon its claim to be saying something true.

Hans Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 302

A dark story circulates in Romania about Christmas night in 1989, and it concerns the historical memory of a whole nation. According to confidential witnesses, during that night, while millions of Romanians were crying out with joy over the fall of the regime in front of TVR1, the national television, unidentified men arrived at the National Archives in Boulevard Mihail Kogălniceanu (nowadays Boulevard Regina Elizabeta) transporting on several trucks cartons of documents from the Central Committee of the Communist Party in Calea Victoriei, a few hundred meters away. They presented themselves with some kind of entry permit, and convinced the security guard to enjoy the night off with his family. Left alone, the men were free to use the large incinerator in the basement of the archive building. According to the legend, they burned thousands of compromising documents during the night, and important sources for the understanding of the communist regime are now lost forever because of that event. Who those men actually were remains unknown, as well as wheter they wore uniforms or which powers they represented. But those who had an interest in the destruction of those documents probably slept more comfortably after that night.

In contemporary Romania, everybody tells this story but no one wants to be acknowledged as a direct witness, or even an indirect one.[1] The story, whether it is totally invented or not, is indicative of the fact that the manipulation of the past was quite a popular sport among the former elite after 1989, and destroying documents was one of its specialities. This account obliges us to come to terms with the fact that the archives left by the communist regime have been weeded and manipulated. While the consultation of material in newly opened archives remains central for this research,[2] it is also necessary to complement this material with other types of sources. Autobiographies and interviews will constitute necessary reference points when constructing the narratives of the present study.

This chapter is dedicated exclusively to a critical evaluation of these three kinds of primary sources: archival sources, autobiographies, and interviews. A critical analysis of these scholarly publications of the communist times will be developed in the empirical chapters, together with a network analysis of the persons connected to ISISP.

3.1 In conversation with the sources

This chapter is not intended to be a second methodological chapter. The research questions, the theory and the method that guided me to elaborate a narrative have already been discussed and clarified. What I intend to present here is the nature of the primary sources used, their potentiality and limitations. As a general introduction to this section, I need to introduce a brief note on the relationship between the researcher and his/her own sources. This is also to give an understanding of myself as researcher, and of my research as a conversation with the sources that lead to an understanding of the research problem.

[1] This account was given to me by a historian from Romania who expressly asked to remain anonymous – since no evidence is available. Anonymity for informants is a common practice in social sciences like anthropology, ethnology, sociology, and political science. I consider and present this account as a rumour, but I acknowledge it as evidence that *suspicion* that the primary sources for historical research on the communism period have been manipulated exists among historians from Romania.
[2] See Dorin Dobrincu, 'A Brief History of Romanian Archive Access since 1989' *Euxeinos* (3/2012), 18–25; Mircea Stanescu, 'Arhivele româneşti după 1989' *Timpul* (6/2005), 12–13, available on http://mircea-stanescu.blogspot.se/2007/12/arhivele-romneti-dup-1989.html. Ioan Drăgan, 'The Romanian Archives and their Documentary Libraries' *Provenance* 1 (18–19/2000), 13–30.

As Hans Georg Gadamer wrote in his work *Truth and Method*, the researcher (a reader of written texts) cannot liberate himself from the burden of prejudice. Pretending objectivity, when analysing the sources, is a distortion of the concept of understanding which is derived from the Enlightenment and Romanticism. During the Enlightenment, Immanuel Kant appealed to scholars to rely on their own faculty of reason and to accept no given authority on the meaning of a text. Gadamer claims that this led scholars, 'to decide everything before the judgement seat of reason. Thus, the written tradition of Scripture, like any other historical document, can claim no absolute validity; the possible truth of the tradition depends on the credibility that reason accords to it'.[3] During the period of Romanticism, instead, the intellectuals insisted on re-establishing the original intentions of the actual author, guarding the text from the prejudices of Enlightenment thinking. But the Romantics understood also that it is precisely our prejudices that drive our understanding of the past (and of the text): 'tradition has a justification that lies beyond rational grounding and in large measure determines our institutions and attitudes'.[4]

When facing the foreign land of the past, the researcher is always placed within a certain tradition, which is not an objective process. What is the tradition, for a specific researcher? It is the whole corpus of theories and methods researchers have learned as part of their scholarly training, the academic discourse as well as the academic language. The education of the researchers puts them in a position which defines their understanding of the world and their approach to scholarly research and, more specifically, towards their own research problem. But what will be their positioning, between prejudices given by the traditions that surround them and that predetermine their reading of the texts and, in this case, of the sources?[5]

According to Gadamer, there is no antithesis between traditions and historical research, or between history and historical knowledge, since they collapse into the interpretation of history, which is the product of a

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[3] Hans Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (London: Continuum, 2004), 274.
[4] Ibid., 282.
[5] Gadamer expresses his research questions in this way: 'Hence in regard to the dominant epistemological methodologism we must ask: has the rise of historical consciousness really divorced our scholarship from this natural relation to the past? Does understanding in the human sciences understand itself correctly when it relegates the whole of its own historicality to the position of prejudices from which we must free ourselves? Or does "unprejudiced scholarship" share more than it realizes with that naive openness and reflection in which traditions live and the past is present?', ibid., 283.

situation in the present: 'the very idea of a situation means that we are not standing outside it and hence are unable to have any objective knowledge of it'.[6] Thus researchers are limited since they are also historical products of their own reflexivity. Our vision is limited, our horizon narrowed by our historicity and by the fact that the historicity of the sources we would like to analyse render them subject to interpretation, and hence they do not say anything true.

What the researcher does when interpreting the past and its sources, given a specific research problem, is to fuse the horizons[7] of his/her own subjectivity (the traditions he/she embodies, his/her prejudices) and of the texts,[8] which carry the burden of all the traditions that have considered them, and to discern the validity of their interpretations in the present.[9] What Gadamer defines as a fusion of the horizons[10] is arguably the best definition of source criticism in historical research. It means to understand the positioning of the researcher, what can be deduced from the sources or, more precisely, from research in conversation with the sources.[11]

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[6] Ibid., 301.

[7] On the concept of horizon: 'A horizon is not a rigid boundary but something that moves with one and invites one to advance further. Thus the horizon intentionality which constitutes the unity of the flow of experience is paralleled by an equally comprehensive horizon intentionality on the objective side. For everything that is given as existent is given in terms of a world and hence brings the world horizon with it'; ibid., 238.

[8] The fusion of horizons is the understanding itself: 'understanding is always the fusion of these horizons supposedly existing by themselves'; ibid., 305.

[9] 'Every encounter with tradition that takes place within historical consciousness involves the experience of a tension between the text and the present. The hermeneutic task consists of not covering up this tension by attempting a naive assimilation of the two but in consciously bringing it out. This is why it is part of the hermeneutic approach to project a historical horizon that is different from the horizon of the present. Historical consciousness is aware of its own otherness and hence foregrounds the horizon of the past from its own. On the other hand, it is itself, as we are trying to show, only something superimposed upon continuing tradition, and hence it immediately recombines with what it has foregrounded itself from in order to become one with itself again in the unity of the historical horizon that it thus acquires'; ibid., 305.

[10] Ibid., 305, see also 301–306.

[11] 'This is not a true conversation—that is, we are not seeking agreement on some subject—because the specific contents of the conversation are only a means to get to know the horizon of the other person. […] Historical consciousness […] transposes itself into the situation of the past and thereby claims to have acquired the right historical horizon. In a conversation, when we have discovered the other person's standpoint and horizon, his ideas become intelligible without our necessarily having to agree with him; so also when someone thinks historically, he comes to understand the meaning of what has been handed down without necessarily agreeing with it or seeing himself in it'; ibid., 302.

In conclusion, I wish to emphasise once again that this brief note is not a second methodological section, but rather a self-reflexive statement that concerns the sources and the burden of meanings that history attributes to them. What follows is my personal attempt to trace a brief history of the sources and to understand their nature, asking what I realistically can expect from them and what I cannot, before entering actively into conversation with them in the empirical chapters.

3.2 Archival sources

In this section I will describe the archival sources consulted at the National Archive and the National Council for the Study of the Securitate Archives (CNSAS), both based in Bucharest. Four different categories of sources are considered: 1) the files of the Central Committee of the RCP, divided into the funds *Cancelarie*, *Propaganda și Agitație*, *Gospodarie*, and *Cadre*; 2) the files of the Party History Institute; 2) the personal archive of the Institute Director between 1961 and 1989, Ion Popescu-Puțuri; and 4) the Securitate files at CNSAS concerning ISISP historians.

Despite the fact that many of the archival sources used here were previously inaccessible or not consulted by scholars, these sources cannot be said to contain "the truth". Rather, they represent ordered collections of documents created with specific rationality that do not coincide with the purpose of this study. Truly unbiased sources simply do not exist. To consider the sources as "neutral" and genuine information coming from the past is a naive idea – a misconception that historians using their skills to critically evaluate sources should be careful to avoid.

Failing to question the archival sources would indeed be dangerous, since it would 'support the archival myth of neutrality and objectivity', giving privilege to the official narrative of the state[12] (in this case, the Party) which is never neutral but rather informed by a clear political function. It is obvious that the living archive of the RCP was created with the intention to further the functioning of the Party. During the interwar period the archive preserved the official documents produced by the Party when it had to

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[12] Joan M. Schwartz, Terry Cook, 'Archives, Records, and Power: From Postmodern Theory to Archival Performance' *Archival Science* (2/2002), 171–185.

operate clandestinely, and only in the subsequent phase of communist rule did it become the primary source repository for ISISP historians.

According to Joan W. Scott, applying source criticism means to decode the analytical framework that underpinned the entire construction of reality embedded in the narratives of the archive and its documents.[13] Unbiased, 'unimpeachable data' do not exist, and historians should question the categories and the interpretations contained in archives, collections of facts or any other source which pretend to be "true" and objective. The historian should try, as a first task, to scrutinize how these pretended unbiased sources were created: for which purpose, by whom, based on which political thoughts. Apart from the actual content of the archives, the historian should also focus their attention on the *form* of the archives, treating them as subjects able to create a narrative.[14] Archives, in this case the PCR archives, are certainly not neutral, since their creators were Party officers who were projecting, during the initial organizing and during the subsequent reorganizations, their beliefs, prejudices and faiths into a governmental technology. This not only conserved but actually furthered their views, helping to buttress the functioning of communist regime and the trans- forming of Marxist-Leninist ideology into reality.

Awareness of the subjectivity of the sources comes first, and the knowledge produced by the historians is an interpretation driven by research questions and hypotheses, rather than a replica or "good prose" based on the information contained in primary sources.[15] The research questions the historian elaborates are an important part of the inquiry, as they help to construct a narrative in dialogue with the sources, using them selectively and critically to confirm or discard hypotheses, and thus avoiding reliance on the narratives embedded in them.

The archival sources relevant to this study are located in the central National Archives of Romania and at the CNSAS, both based in Bucharest. The first two categories of sources listed (the CC of the PCR files and the ISISP files) have an intriguing and interrelated history, worth mentioning as a testimony on the abuses committed by the Party and by the state when managing state and Party documents, both from a legal point of view and

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[13] Joan W. Scott, 'A Statistical representation of work' in *Gender and the Politics of History*, ed. J. W. Scott (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 113–138.
[14] Ann Laura Stoller, 'Colonial Archives and the Arts of Governance', *Archival Science* 2 (2002), 87–109; 100.
[15] Ludmila Jordanova, *History in practice* (London: Hodder Arnold, 2000), 171.

from the perspective of archival professionalism. The Archive of the CC was ordered towards the end of the 1940s at the Household Section (*Gospodăria de Partid*), but it was later partitioned, part of it being transferred to the ISISP archive in 1953 by a decision of the CC itself. The same destiny befell the documents preserved at other organs and institutions of the Party. What emerged was a distinction between the Historical Archive of the Party, managed by ISISP, which was given the task to 'manage, preserve, and conserve all the documents and the materials concerning the activity of the Party',[16] and the Archive of the CC. For this reason, in 1953 several documents from Party sections all over the country were transferred to the Party archive, and thousands of documents produced by the Party were also sent every year to the central archive of ISISP.[17] In addition, many archival deposits belonging to the state and to other institutions were merged with the ISISP archive.

After 1990, when ISISP was ultimately closed, the Party Historical Archive run by ISISP was transferred following a Government Decision (21/1990) first to the Library of the Romanian Academy, where it was kept until 2001 when it was transferred to the National Archives. Here, during the last 15 years, a great and complicated work has been undertaken in order to reassemble in a new sequence and composition the various archival remnants of different Party organizations, sections and institutions.

The Archive of the CC had another destiny after 1989. Due to the sensitivity of these documents, the new government decided to transfer them with some urgency into the custody of the Defence Ministry, which stored them on a military base in Pitești. There they remained until 1993 when they were requested by the National Archives. This access was eventually granted in 1995.[18]

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[16] Gabriel Catalan, *Fondul ISISP*, in http://www.arhivelenationale.ro/index.php?lan=0&page=122

[17] Ibidem.

[18] On the vicissitudes of the CC Archive, see the inventories of the CC archive's units accessible on the National Archive website: ANIC, *Inventar n. 3296, 3124, 3125* (CC al PCR – Secția Cancelarie), 1–5. Idem, *Inventar n. 3295* (CC al PCR – Secția Cadre), 1–3; Idem, *Inventar n. 3291* (CC al PCR – Secția Propagandă și Agitație), 1–3. The precarious state of the CC archive is described by the witness Ioan Scurtu, 'Probleme privind predarea la Arhivele Statului a Arhivei Securității și a Arhivei CC al PCR', *Clipa*, May 2013, available online at http://www.revistaclipa.com/8158/2013/05/repere-academice/probleme-privind-predarea-la-arhivele-statului-a-arhivei-securitati-a-arhivei-cc-al-pcr. See also Bottoni, 'Memorie negate', 411.

Four archival deposits in the archive of the Central Committee of the Communist Party are of particular importance for my research: *Cancelarie*, *Propaganda și Agitație*, *Gospodarie*, and *Cadre*. These deposits have provided the most important sources for the scholars writing on the history of Romanian communism after 1989. These documents testify to the power and the control exerted by the Party in ruling the country, including its cultural politics. The files stored in the *Cancelarie* deposit contain transcripts of the official meetings of the executive bureau of the CC of the RCP. While *per se* the decisions taken provide information concerning only the chronology of some of the research questions (for example, the organizational changes of ISISP), some of these files provide a clear view of the problems experienced in the organizations, the decisions actually made, and also the various available options. This material therefore provides valuable inroads to other and more specific sources for the historical inquiry.

The Propaganda and Agitation Section was the authority that dictated cultural policies. It applied the norms and directives decided by the leadership but it also proposed means of implementation, concrete development and realization of these policies in practice. Its intensive activity in the whole sphere of culture is testified to by the impressive number of reports and other documents produced on cultural and propaganda topics. The activity of the Propaganda and Agitation Section included the control of intellectuals at all levels and in each and every institution, including the field of historiography.

The Cadre Section is probably the best archival deposit for the compilation of short biographies of ISISP historians who were also members of the Party. These files are personal dossiers containing basic personal data and information on the educational and political career of the subject. In several cases they also include reports on the subject, aiming to demonstrate qualities and political reliability. Most of the files concerning the top of the nomenclature are missing; others merely contain the report made by the Party (barely one page). After the fall of the regime, the most compromising and revealing material was deleted from the Party archives.

The second deposit of vital importance is the ISISP archive, which contains all the documents produced by the Institute for both internal and public use. Among the ISISP files, those documenting the discussions among the historians in the Steering Committee of the Institute have a very central position in the present study. These minutes show how the historians created and organized historical research by interpreting, applying and adjusting to the meta-narrative canon imposed by the Party.

These documents are extremely useful since they show the different positions and arguments of the members of the Steering Committee on the actual narratives of history – differences that cannot be traced in the published works. This material provides the unique opportunity to see beyond the seemingly uniform or even monolithic narratives in the printed works of the "front of historians". All the sources kept in the Institute archives bear witness to the constant and multifaceted activity of ISISP between scholarly production and propaganda activities, and are thus clearly worth considering.

I have also used the personal archive of Ion Popescu-Puțuri, Director of ISISP between 1961 and 1989, kept at the National Archives but not part of the CC deposit. The most relevant files concern the operation of ISISP: internal meetings, projects, and internal and intra-Party correspondence. As one of the most powerful individuals within the communist regime, he seems to have had no qualms in bringing home a number of internal ISISP documents.

The last archival deposit I have checked is the Securitate Archive, kept at a special institution: the National Council for the Study of the Securitate Archives (CNSAS). This is an autonomous administrative authority with juridical responsibility, controlled by the Romanian parliament and working according to *ad hoc* national laws.[19] The files I have consulted in the Securitate Archive were created by the Romanian secret police. The archive material was created with the purpose of serving the needs of the secret police, not the historian. Of all the archival sources I have used, these are certainly the most incomplete and also the most problematic for a contemporary historian. Previous research, both on the Securitate and on the GDR's Stasi, has pointed out that using secret police files entails several limitations and difficulties.

First of all, the secret police operated according to a major master narrative: the suspicion of an ongoing attack on state ideology; consequently, the files present this interpretation of reality. The actions of the persons under surveillance, and of the collaborators, are presented under

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[19] For a brief excursus on the history of the Securitate archives and its use, see the legal frame of CNSAS on its webpage: http://www.cnsas.ro/cadrul_legal.html. For a critical history of the Securitate archives and its political use, see Lavinia Stan, 'Spies, files, and lies: explaining the failure of access to Securitate files' *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 37 (2004), 341–359.

this narrative canon, which orders and transforms the experience.[20] Second, the regime may have succeeded in hiding or destroying essential evidence in order to avoid criminal accountability or public shame once the regime was dismantled and the archive opened for scrutiny.[21] Third, the actual purpose of collecting certain information is not overtly expressed in the files.[22] Fourth, collaborators may certainly have lied or distorted the truth for a series of reasons, particularly those who had been forced to collaborate. Some became honest collaborators, others less honest, to the point of being considered "untrustworthy" by the Securitate.[23] Finally, the secret police archives are instruments by which it is possible to manipulate the present, and therefore their use is not limited to establishing a historical narrative but is also a part of contemporary Romanian politics.[24]

What I have been searching for in these dossiers are interpersonal relationships; networks of trust and distrust among the historians. The machinery of control that the regime applied to the intellectuals has received considerable attention[25] – what is interesting for my purpose is rather the study of *what Securitate could see through its informants*, limiting my interest to the reconstruction of networks rather than intelligence inter-pretations, and exploiting the involuntary memory (*mémoire involontaire*)[26] contained in the information in the files, not the files' narrative.

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[20] Jeffrey Wallen, 'Narrative Tensions: The Archive and the Eyewitness', *Partial Answers: Journal of Literature and the History of Ideas* 7 (2/2009), 261–278; 274, 276. As Virgil Poenaru observed, 'by inscribing the Securitate archive as a site of truth about the past, post-communism simply prolonged its logic into the present', quoted in Verdery, *Secrets and Truths: Ethnography in the Archive of Romania's Secret Police* (Budapest: CEU Press, 2014), 73; see also ibid., 60–73.

[21] Emily Kozinski, Carolyn Hank, 'Removing Records Documenting Acts of Violence and Atrocities from the Archive', *iConference 2012*, February 7–10, 2012, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

[22] Joachim Gauk, Martin Fry, 'Dealing with a Stasi Past', *Daedalus*, 123 (1/1994), 277–284; 281–282.

[23] Interview with Sorin Antohi, Bucharest, February 10th, 2013. Antohi, a former colla-borator with the Securitate, claimed that 'the Securitate discarded me as insincere'.

[24] See, for example, Gabriel Andreescu, *Cărturari, opozanți și documente. Manipularea Arhivei Securității* (Iași: Polirom, 2013).

[25] Ioan Opriș, *Istoricii și Securitatea* (Bucharest: Editura Enciclopedică, Vol. I (2004) and II (2006)).

[26] Wallen, 271.

3.3 Autobiographies

Most of the information required for the purposes of this dissertation is unfortunately unavailable in archives. To remind the reader: since I am seeking to identify the networks and power structures that determined the development of history-writing at the Party History Institute, much of the useful information I am searching for concerns personal contacts (both professional and personal), power structures (patron/clientele relationship), and conflicts between individuals and networks. Such information is necessary in order to determine which networks were present both inside the Institute and on its outskirts, and how their presence influenced the process of history-writing.

For this reason, the memories, diaries, and oral accounts of historians and employees of ISISP after the fall of Ceaușescu's regime are central testimonies that contribute to an understanding of the trajectories followed by the historians in their milieu, and the proximity of the milieu itself to the political needs of the regime. Autobiography is a literary genre that historians have approached quite recently, probably because 'autobiography meddles with academic knowledge in its desire for clear and detached understanding'.[27] On the other hand, since the linguistic turn, scholars of literature have gone far in affirming the relevance of autobiographies for historical narratives, and have also pointed to the possibility of taking them into consideration for historiographical purposes.[28]

Autobiography cannot be identified as a genre since it has no distinguishable history or specific canon, but should rather be considered as a tendency of writing about the self, beginning in the context of 19th century Romanticism and aimed at communicating the subjectivity of the authors – eventually acquiring a certain political significance. It is the same "tendency" by which racial, ethnic and gender-based consciousness takes form,[29] the narration of the self being the most effective way to claim an identity, and to develop the point of view of the author. The historians who wrote these autobiographies had privileged positions in the former communist regime, certainly, but they were far from being powerful persons. As

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[27] Robert Smith, *Derrida and Autobiography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 52.
[28] An example is the International Conference on Biography organized by Örebro University, Sweden, where literary theorists and historians discussed matters concerning "Narration and Narratives as an Interdisciplinary Field of Study", October 2012.
[29] Smith, 60–61.

described in the theoretical chapter, they were positioned between several scholarly standards and the Party canon, which meant that their performance as historians was measured on a double-scale of values until the regime's collapse in 1989.

After that, criticism of the former political and cultural elites touched each and every one of the ISISP historians, even if they had been in the streets of Bucharest on 21–22 December 1989 (together with many from the *Securitate*). The choices they had made during their entire lives were now judged under canons that they could not have possibly considered in their past daily activities, and which were definitely far from Bucharest's previous cultural environment. Apologetic or white-washing intentions, therefore, appear very clearly in some of them. For example, historian Florin Constantiniu's memoirs published in 2007 offer a narrative on the relationship between politics and historical research in communist Romania.[30] In his narration he did not omit his collaboration with the *Securitate*, but he did not write about the nature of the contacts he was describing – a nature discovered one year later by the Iorga Institute historian Şerban Radulescu-Zoner.[31]

These autobiographies certainly give voice to the authors, a voice that had previously been confined to the private sphere[32], both before 1989 when no opinion other than the official one could be expressed, and also after 1989 when they were marked by their identity as former historians of the Party. Judging from the print-runs of these autobiographies, which were never more than 500 copies, their desire to tell their story in post-communist Romania has been welcomed with some interest in the scholarly community and by the network of historian protagonists of these events, but has definitely had a secondary impact on scholarly research and almost none at all among a wider audience.

All the autobiographies used for the purposes of this study were written after the fall of the communist regime by historians of the Bucharest

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[30] Florin Constantiniu, *De la Răutu şi Roller la Muşat şi Ardeleanu* (Bucharest: Editura Enciclopedică, 2007).

[31] Şerban Radulescu-Zoner, *Securitatea în Institutul de istorie Nicolae Iorga* (Bucharest: Editura Cavallioti, 2008). See also Costel Oprea, 'Academicianul Florin Constantiniu, informator al Securităţii?', *România Libera*, 17 April 2008, http://www.romanialibera.ro/actualitate/eveniment/academicianul-florin-constantiniu--informator-al-securitatii--122712 Constantiniu's file is present in the Securitate archives: CNSAS, R 268425, Securitate report, October 15, 1986.

[32] See the theoretical discussion on postcolonial theory and autobiography in Robert Huddart, *Postcolonial Theory and Autobiography* (London and New York: Routledge, 2008), 37–45.

historiographical milieu active during the Ceauşescu period. They all graduated in history from the University of Bucharest, and worked directly for ISISP and/or for the journals published by the Institute. Most of them reached high positions at the University of Bucharest, at ISISP, and/or as cultural policy-makers and cadre selectors. As a preliminary observation, it should be noted that all the networks analysed in these autobiographies seem to be strongly interconnected: all these historians knew each other, or had at least some persons in common in their respective networks. The autobiographies I have especially considered are written by Florin Con-stantiniu,[33] Titu Georgescu,[34] Dinu C. Giurescu,[35] Gheorghe I. Ioniță, Şerban Rădulescu-Zoner,[36] Apostol Stan,[37] and Marian Ştefan.[38]

The methodology and sources used when writing these autobiographies vary considerably. Marian Ştefan made use of notations in his diary from 1967 to 1989, thereby providing a very useful and unique instrument for analysing the working milieu of *Magazin Istoric* and its surrounding network of historians. Titu Georgescu could also rely on his diaries and daily notes when writing his memoir in three volumes, published between 2001 and 2004. Other autobiographers, like Gheorghe I. Ioniță, had to reorder their daily notes, and this procedure gives the reader memories that are reconstructed and re-elaborated in an *a posteriori* interpretation that the use of a daily diary to some extent prevents. But, of course, the goal of objectivity claimed by Ştefan for his autobiography (a claim strengthened by the diary form in which the volume is presented), should perhaps be seen as a pretence or a literary appeal to the audience, since Objectivity is just as unreachable as Truth.

All of the autobiographies written after 1989 should be seen as attempts to reclaim the author's professional seriousness, with a partial but clear self-

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[33] Constantiniu, *De la Răutu şi Roller*, cit.

[34] Titu Georgescu, *Tot un Fel de Istorie* vol. I (Râmnicu Vâlcea: Editura Conphys, 2001).

[35] Dinu C. Giurescu, *De la SovRomconstrucţii nr.6 la Academia Română* (Bucharest: Editura Meronia, 2008).

[36] Şerban Rădulescu-Zoner, *A fost un destin. Amintiri, mărturii, dezvăluiri* (Bucharest Editura Paideia, 2003).

[37] Apostol Stan, *De Veghe la Scrierea Istoriei* (Securitatea) (Bucharest: Curtea Veche, 2012); idem, *Istorie şi Politica in România Comunista* (Bucharest: Curtea Veche, 2010); idem, *Revoluţia Română văzută din stradă. Decembrie 1989 – Iunie 1990* (Bucharest: Curtea Veche, 2007).

[38] Marian Ştefan, *Trăite, văzute, auzite. 1967–1989* (Bucharest: Editura Oscar Print, 2004). The other volume is composed of memories (*aminţiri*) from Marian's youth: Ştefan, *Nucul de la vie. Aminţirii*, (Bucharest: Editura Oscar Print, 2009).

apologetic or justificatory agenda. In the same way as archival material, the autobiographies are documents which may or may not provide complete information. Still, they have the advantage that they provide links and connections, helping to trace and map power relationships that are otherwise difficult to see, and which are still a *terra incognita* for the scholarly community except for the protagonists of the events. Most of these autobiographies are not considered scholarly writings by their authors – but the authors' professions have certainly influenced the narratives about their own lives and the events they have witnessed – or *lived, viewed, heard*, to paraphrase the title of Marian Ştefan's autobiography.

And, in the list of contraindications we are enumerating, we must add the possible involuntary or voluntary misinterpretations of events given by these authors' own direct involvement in them. More generally, memory is fallible[39] for a number of reasons. It is a recollection of fragments from the past,[40] performed by the minds of their authors.[41] According to Paul Ricoeur and the memory studies field he contributed to develop, the real problem for the historian reading an autobiography is to distinguish between the information that produced the affection of the memory and the affection itself.[42] Autobiography is a non-scholarly form, not governed by any standard; it is chaotic and subject to change according to the moment in which the memories it describes become fixed (in the mind or in a written account).[43] Autobiography is a performance of imagination[44] with sources considered true.

Despite their profession as historians, the authors of these autobiographies cannot exit from their own perspective and point of view when reflecting on their own past, since this is a personal experience requiring interpretation. The work of memory, in this case, differs in the diaries and autobiographies written on a daily basis, and the accounts written after 1989. The interpretations made after 1989 are a product of what Ricoeur,

[39] Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting* (Chicago-London: The University of Chicago Press, 2004).
[40] Ibid., 120.
[41] 'Memory is of the past', ibid., 15.
[42] Ibid., 16. As Ricoeur clarifies: 'What is it that we remember? Is it the affection or the thing that produced it? If it is the affection, then it is not something absent one remembers; if it is the thing, while perceiving the impression, could we remember the absent thing that we are not at present perceiving? In other words, while perceiving an image, how can we remember something distinct from it?' Ibid., 16–17.
[43] Ibid., 17. The mark of the past resumes its own significance and its causation.
[44] Ibid., 44 ss.

following Maurice Halbwachs, calls 'collective memory',[45] constituting the basis of a new collective discourse.[46] According to Ricoeur, 'to remember, we need others'.[47] The autobiographer lives in a cultural system; his/her memory is shaped and supported by it, and constructed according to (or in opposition to) the accounts that others have given.[48] The memory there expressed is the product of a context, and the social framework of the present is fundamental to an understanding of these biographies.[49] The knowledge they offer must be treated with proper care.[50]

Writing an autobiography is also to claim an identity – the character of the professional historian in all the cases I have considered, the loyal patriot in some of them. This sort of civil patriotism is considered by autobiography authors as expressed by their loyalty towards the state. Interestingly, not many references are made in these autobiographies about national minorities and their cultures. This is due to the fact that the historians' environment was ethnically and culturally Romanian: no place was more central than Bucharest in communist Romania for national culture, it was the centre of production of ethnocentric literature *par excellence*.[51] No cultural border was close to the location of the historians, their daily life or their workplace. The members of their professional community had been the main active promoters of national culture in the field of history since the beginning of the communist regime in Romania. In the plans of the regime, where they were labelled "the historical front", they promoted a national ideology that was imposed on the rest of the country in support of the Party and its leadership. They constituted a very central cultural elite. In this sense, no border was closed to them, except one: the border between being Party activists and professional historians. They were both.

What Ricoeur describes as a 'social framework', and what I generalized previously as a 'cultural system', is what in Homi K. Bhabha's theorizing takes the place of 'the nation', defined as *the narrative on the nation*. This is

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[45] Ibid., 120.

[46] 'A new historiography', wrote Ricoeur paraphrasing Nietzsche and his *Unfashionable Observations on the Utility and Liability of History for Life*; Ibid., 68–69.

[47] Ibid., 121.

[48] Ibidem: 'we are never alone' in forging our memory.

[49] Ibid., 122.

[50] Ibid., 102–121.

[51] Nevertheless, the Hungarian intellectuals found in Bucharest much more opportunity and open-mindedness than in Transylvania – e.g., in the nationalist and intolerant environment at the Babeş-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca.

created in a process where 'to forget becomes the basis for remembering the nation, peopling it anew, imagining the possibility of other contending and liberating forms of cultural identification'.[52] While the discourse on the nation was kept under control and under pressure during communist times by the official Marxist-Leninist framework,[53] the end of the regime offered to each and every person in the national community the possibility to rewrite the nation.[54]

The circulation of ideas on the nation among those who live in it produces identities derived from creative and agonistic processes.[55] The pedagogic discourse (which is the equivalent to Ricoeur's understanding of collective memory) and the performative aspect influence each other: while the pedagogic discourse tries to impose a shared but historicized discourse on the nation, condensing a secure and stable vision of community, its reception influences the performative aspect of the nation and the further development of nationalist pedagogy. But the pedagogy of nationalism cannot control and fix identities, because these are always contested by other identities 'such as class, race or sexual identities' – which are themselves contested as *monolithic* by liminal identities. And every identity is at the present time (after 1989) capable of being considered liminal[56] when con-

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[52] Homi K. Bhabha, 'DissemiNation: time, narrative, and the margins of the modern nation', in *Nation and Narration*, ed. Homi K. Bhabha (London: Routledge, 1990), 291–322, 311.

[53] Martin Mevius has shown that as the regime increasingly promoted nationalist views in history, the Marxist one became increasingly inadequate. Martin Mevius, *Defending 'Historical and Political Interests': Romanian-Hungarian Historical Disputes and the History of Transylvania*, in *Hungary and Romania Beyond National Narratives: Comparisons and Entanglements*, eds. Anders E.B. Blomqvist, Constantin Iordachi, Balázs Trencsényi (Bern: Peter Lang, 2013), 569–606.

[54] This does not mean that national ideology was not constantly implemented during the regime. In fact, it was; but the tension between the collective memory of the nation and its discourse was always mediated by intellectuals loyal to the Party and by Party activists. See Katherine Verdery, *National Ideology under Socialism: Identity and Cultural Politics In Ceaușescu's Romania* (Press, Berkley, Los Angeles: University of California, 1991).

[55] David Huddart, *Homi K. Bhabha* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 70.

[56] The term 'liminal' was invented at the beginning of the 20th century by Arnold Van Gennep to indicate the condition of marginality of a group in a rite of passage. In 1967, Victor Turner indicated that liminal entities 'have no status', since they are in a context that symbolically represent for them 'a grave and a womb'; Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (Chicago: Aldine, 1969), 94–95. Bhabha identifies it as 'the term [that] stress [...] the idea that what is in-between settled cultural forms or identities – identities like self and other – is central to the creation of new cultural meaning'; David Huddart, *Homi K. Bhabha* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 4–5. The

fronted with the tyranny of the nationalist official history of national-communism, and the (contemporary) image of communist Romania as a prison. This applies even to the identity of those who contributed to the forging of such official history, living comfortably in the centre of Bucharest close to the centre of power and its economic resources. In this sense, every autobiography written in Romania after 1989 can claim a liminal condition and the courage of dissidence during the communist period, by offering an image of the self as marked by the scars of oppression.

Another social framework of collective memory concerns the clash between the 'vernacular memory'[57] of the ISISP historians and the memories that are recorded in their autobiographies. Very few ISISP historians, who knew each other well as colleagues, wrote in their autobiographies about their individual work careers. Evidently, their common (day by day) experience was framed within a collective discourse. As a collective, day by day, they agreed that a certain event was relevant for establishing a discourse on their experience. In their memoires written after 1989, the historians present a non-conflictual version of the past,which is the result of a new individual performance of the self in the present and of their collective discourse.

This vernacular memory is confronted and criticized by the autobiographies written by non-ISISP historians, who did not empathize with the regime, and their individual memory is composed specifically as a counter-memory to the ISISP collective memory, confirming or negating details or entire narratives. The non-ISISP historians' autobiographies share a collective memory which is also a once-forbidden counter-memory of the officially labelled "front of the historians" that the regime attributed to them, and which was free to express itself once the regime censorship dissolved in 1989.[58]

memory conveyed by the autobiographies and interviews of the historians I research is certainly liminal, since it is a new reading (and a new performance of the self – see below) in a new context (post-1989 Romania).

[57] 'A popular memory (sometimes referred to as *vernacular memory*) is a version held by a group of people who do not necessarily possess power – except cultural power as songwriters, story-tellers, poets, speakers – but who have shared an experience'. Valerie Raleigh Yow, *Recording Oral History. A Guide for the Humanities and Social Sciences* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005), 54.

[58] On collective memory during and after totalitarian regimes, see Luisa Passerini (ed.), *Memory and Totalitarianism* (Transactions Publishers, 1992), 2: 'We can remember only thanks to the fact that somebody has remembered before us, that other people in the past

A vital task remains when analysing these autobiographies: to distinguish memories as an interpretation dictated by present discourse on the past, and on the other hand make use of relevant information concerning facts, names, events, and networks for the purpose of my study. So, how can these autobiographies be used? My intention is to discard their apologetic bias, and instead focus on ancillary information provided by the narrative, such as everyday practices and bureaucratic procedures not connected directly to the author's own actions. Admittedly, it is difficult to reconstruct networks from the autobiographies' narratives, since these could well be influenced by later events. As has been shown in the previous chapter, groups could in retrospect be portrayed as stable, while evidence suggests that they were not. Despite these qualifications, autobiographies do provide some valuable information on networks and groups. I will treat this information with some caution since it was produced after 1989, and I will try to find corroborating evidence in the archival material. Treated with this kind of caution, autobiographies are still vital for the purpose of my study, especially when it comes to the reconstruction of networks.

Summing up, the autobiographies of historians can be seen as a vital material for my study if certain considerations and qualifications are made. First, there should be recognition that the authors imagined and framed the materials of their memory according to the discourses elaborated by a series of social frameworks (and networks) in which they lived, including the national one; and second, that with their memories they contributed to the forging of a new image of the networks in which they were inserted, in this case the cultural milieu of Bucharest, and in consequence of the national discourse on the past. With this in mind, the autobiographies remain fundamental. Their narrations can be used in order to recreate the active stage of the protagonists of history-writing at ISISP more than the archival documents can do, and they help to find a number of case studies around which narratives can be created providing a deeper understanding of the complex functioning of ISISP during the communist period.

have challenged death and terror on the basis of their memory. Remembering had to be conceived as a highly inter-subjective relationship'.

3.4 Interviews

Some of my sources are interviews with the protagonists of the events, the ISISP historians and historians connected to other Bucharest-based institutions. This material is a necessary component of my study since no archival deposit can fully provide the information needed to answer my research questions.

The interviews share the same kind of problem presented by the auto-biographies, but at an analytical level they differ: in the interviews, the interviewer can try to organize the pursuit of knowledge by posing specific questions; in addition, interviews offer the possibility to pose follow-up questions, and to attack the silences of the interviewee's narrative. The choice to adopt oral history[59] as a method has several theoretical implications related to the nature of oral testimony. This is due to the fact that the person who conducts interviews for specific purposes has, at least in the case of this dissertation, a knowledge of the topic and subsequently knows his position on it – a mixture of previous knowledge and prejudice. The positioning of the interviewer towards the subject and his positioning in a determined time and place have fundamental importance, equal to the subjectivity of the answers given by the interviewees.[60]

Another major problem connected to oral history that has to be handled is the position of the interviewer towards the interviewee, and the propensity of the former to direct the latter towards the enunciation of a certain specific knowledge.

The choice of oral history also brings with it the responsibility of creating a new archive: the interviews constitute the first oral history archive of Romanian historians connected to ISISP. This will remain a resource for

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[59] I adopt the definition of oral history given by Yow: 'Oral history is the recording of personal testimony delivered in oral form. […] What is the oral history? Is it the taped memoir? Is it the written transcript? Is it the research method that involves in-depth interviewing? The term refers to all three'. Raleigh Yow, *Recording Oral History*, 3.

[60] According to Bos, 'Not only does the methodology of oral history transform the agency of the narrator and those involved in the histories, the methodology ultimately changes what is studied. Questions closely connected with social history coincide with oral history methodologies, while 'official' or 'national' histories often do not consider such issues. The content of oral history […] is special and unique not only because of the political motivation but also the set of distinctive questions explored by researchers'. Source: Brittney Ann Bos, 'Historical Memory and the Representation of History: Forging Connections between National Historic Sites and Gender History', *Conserveries mémorielles* (9/2001), available at http://cm.revues.org/836.

future research because no such collection has previously been made. The creation of an archive available for research is a responsibility that the researcher has towards the scholarly community, but also to the broader public in general and the protagonists of the events. This actually strengthens the obligation to follow a strict methodology, since the whole process of preparing, recording, transcribing and storing the interviews requires a methodology that is a vital prerequisite for future researchers using this material.[61]

During the last decade oral history has been considered by scholars as synergic with performance studies: 'performance – whether we are talking about the everyday act of telling a story or the staged reiteration of stories – is an especially charged, contingent, reflexive space of encountering the complex web of our respective histories'.[62] Since stories do not tell themselves, the performative aspect is embodied indissolubly in the interviews as testimonies of events, bridging 'being and becoming',[63] and changing the view of the past. But the limitation of this power/knowledge matrix that is the testimony ('*that's what I saw; that's what happened; that's how things are; that's my/the story; that's who I am*')[64] lies exactly in acknowledging that the oral testimonies embody a performative aspect and the subsequent rhetorical strategies of a live-dialogue performance.[65]

I have interviewed, in hours-long semi-structured interviews, several of the historians involved in ISISP and its surrounding institutions, and also historians now doing research on communist Romania. The specific methodology when formulating interview questions has been guided by the general methodological considerations prevalent in the discipline of history: a preference for problem-oriented questions, since the oral archive I have created is primarily driven by the necessity to obtain specific information.

[61] David Henige, 'Where Seldom is Heard a Discouraging Word: Method in Oral History', *The Oral History Review* (14/1986), 42. See also: Barbara W. Sommer, Mary Kay Quinlan, *The Oral History Manual (Second Edition)* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2009), 4, 7.

[62] Della Pollock (ed.), *Remembering. Oral History Performance* (New York: Palgrave, 2005), 1.

[63] Ibidem.

[64] Pollock argues against this incorrect syllogism in Delia Pollock, 'Beyond Experience', *Cultural Studies ⇔ Critical Methodologies* (9/2009), 636–646.

[65] The rhetorical criticism is fundamental to understanding the interviews in their dimensions of oral speeches. For a basic understand of rhetoric and its criticism from a neo-Aristotelian point of view, see Sonja K. Foss, *Rhetorical Criticism. Exploration and Practice. Second Edition* (Waveland Press, 2009), 27–31.

These questions are based on my previous knowledge on the subject. Another factor that helped me when structuring the interviews was the attempt to find a suitable narrative able to convey meaningful knowledge about ISISP. Apart from the history of ISISP itself, this means creating an understanding of communist and post-communist Romania, of its historiography, of the cultural elite, of the interrelationships between national and socialist ideology, the political agendas of the regime, and the position of the intellectuals.[66] Each interview was planned well in advance.[67] Most of the interviews were planned to be structured, but turned out in actual practice to be semi-structured or snowball interviews.[68] The choice of place, as well as the language used in the interviews,[69] was left to the interviewees in order to make them feel comfortable while recounting their memories to me.[70]

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[66] On the different approaches to oral history interviews used by historians, see Yow, 8–9.

[67] The person to be interviewed was asked at least one week beforehand and was informed about the topic of the interview. Some of the interviewees asked me to have the specific questions I would pose in advance, others did not ask for them even if previous telephone and/or e-mail contacts had informed them partially about the questions. Each interview was prepared individually: I studied the biography of the interviewee and I prepared a set of questions.

[68] In many cases, the interviewees took answered my questions indirectly.

[69] With each interviewee there was a dialogue beforehand on the language to be used in the interview, leaving them the opportunity to choose. The interviews were conducted in either Romanian, English, or Italian, according to the choice of the interviewee, and were transcribed in the original language.

[70] Sommer, Quinlan, 25.

PART TWO

The Party History Institute
from Stalinism to National-Communism

The Party logic of control and the conflicts over historical narratives, 1948–1958

The Party History Institute has been considered by previous research as an organization deprived of agency. In this way, its history has been considered as unproblematic Party organization. Therefore, the tensions in the field of history-writing have been considered to represent a tension between the Party and the scholarly institutions. But a wide body of literature on Soviet Stalinism as a new civilization succeeded in demonstrating that the Soviet Union's history-writing was not driven by a tension between Party and scholarship, but by their symbiotic relationship. This theorization succeeded, in the case of the Soviet Union, in explaining the consequent downfall of its values after the death of Stalin.

This chapter's driving force is to understand the mechanism of history-writing in Romania in the first decade of communism. Specifically, this chapter provide answers to the following questions on the Institute and its personnel: What tensions regulated their work? What agency did they have? How did they cope with changes? Which strategies were adopted? A huge, unexplored new set of primary sources from the Institute's archive constitute the main body of sources of this research. In the chapter, those sources are contextualized within the shifting paradigms of cultural politics.

4.1 Faith in science

The work of Stephen Kotkin on Stalinism as a civilization has pointed out that 'Stalinism constituted a quintessential Enlightenment utopia'.[1] The focus that the Soviet Union put on the building of a new civilization brought with it a tendency to consider every pre-existing society as old and corrupt. Pre-existing culture – and previous material circumstances – were seen as completely irrelevant to the construction of the new Stalinist civilization. This new culture should be built by the new and progressive protagonists of history – in Marxian views, the proletariat that would build the classless society of socialism. Far from considering it as utopian, the Soviet Union followed Engels's distinction between utopia and 'scientific socialism', and clearly embraced the latter.[2]

In the history of the Soviet Union, two processes inserted into two distinct historical phases are identifiable. The first phase of the first process, led by cultural politics, was the effort, in the first ten years of the Soviet Union's existence, to build a new people, the Soviets, in an attempt to respond to the centrifugal forces of the various nationalisms existing in a multi-ethnic state.[3] The second phase was from the 1930s onwards: the re-emergence of Russian nationalism, in order to infuse patriotism against national-socialist racial propaganda.[4]

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[1] Stephen Kotkin, *Magnetic Mountain. Stalinism as a civilization* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 364. The metaphor offered by Kotkin concerning the city of Magnitogorsk, an industrial city built far from other settlements 40 miles east of the Ural mountains in 1929, as the utopian 'City of the Sun' portrayed by Tommaso Campanella, demonstrates the essential newness of Stalinist culture.

[2] Kotkin is critical of the conclusions of Leszek Kołakowsky (who is generalized by Kotkin as one of 'the philosophers') about Marxism as a 'false science': 'the historian should not so quickly dismiss Marxism's claims to be scientific. The claim inspired millions of people both inside and outside the Soviet Union, and informed the thinking of much of what went on under Stalin (and after) […]. If the scientificity of Marxism socialism needs to be taken seriously, however, so does its utopian aspect. Like the Enlightenment mentality out of which it grew, Marxism socialism was an attractive schema for realizing the kingdom of heaven on earth', ibid., 8.

[3] Terry Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire: Nations and Nationalism In the Soviet Union, 1923–1939* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001).

[4] See David Brandenberger, *National Bolshevism: Stalinist Mass Culture and the Formation of Modern Russian National Identity, 1931–1956* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002). Adriano Roccucci, *Stalin e il Patriarca. La Chiesa Ortodossa e il potere sovietico* (Torino: Einaudi, 2011). Ž. A. Medvedev, R. A. Medvedev, *Stalin sconosciuto alla luce degli archivi segreti sovietici*, 301–305. Balázs Apor, J. C. Behrends, P. Jones, A. E. Rees, *The Leader Cult in Communist Dictatorships. Stalin and the Eastern Bloc* (New York: Pelgrave Macmillan, 2004).

The second process was the adaptation of the population to the new context in both historical phases. Stephen Kotkin considered that the scholars learned to 'speak Bolshevik',[5] since this was a way in which the citizens of the Soviet Union adapted their identities to Stalinism. Nevertheless, recognizing the adaptation of the population to a uniform rhetoric does not help us to understand the changes historically. Reconsidering Kotkin's conclusions, Anna Krylova focuses instead on the new cultural forms that emerged under Stalinist domination. She identifies new categories of identity, which she defined as 'post-Bolshevik': categories that allowed individuality and personality to emerge due to the adherence to the common Bolshevik language. It is in this way that veterans, new Party activists, and intellectuals learned to 'speak Bolshevik', a language that allowed them to 'connect [...] individual predispositions and goals with the social good'.[6]

Once communist regimes had taken power in Eastern Europe, the same combination of control and propaganda of communist ideals became vital instruments when breaking with the past and founding the new civilization. Marxism-Leninism was considered by the Romanian regime as the ultimate science (*știință*) containing within it all scientific and scholarly subjects, to which the Romanian language refers to with the noun *științe* (plural). From 1948, the national scholarly community was forced to 'speak Bolshevik'. Historians were therefore exhorted to be inspired by the bright example offered by the Soviet Union in writing scientific history (*istoria științifică*),[7] under the General Direction of the Party tenets and under the direct supervision of Mihail Roller, a true believer in Stalinism and vice-president of the Romanian Academy.

The interpretation of the Party history-writing environment in communist Romania as an intermixed milieu of post-Bolshevik identities, collectives that had different origins and values but that – metaphorically – were speaking the same language, helps to give significance to the conflicts between different networks, and also to deconstruct the monolithic image that the Party propagated of its own history and identity. I consider these cultural forms as instruments in the quest for resources. Individuals could

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[5] Kotkin, *Magnetic Mountain*, 201.

[6] Anna Krylova, 'Soviet Modernity: Stephen Kotkin and the Bolshevik Predicament', *Contemporary European History* 23 (02/2014), 167–192, 171.

[7] Mihail Roller, *Probleme de Istorie. Contribuții la lupta pentru o istorie științifică in R. P. R.*, (Bucharest: Editura Partidului Muncitoresc Roman, III ed., 1951). The adjective *științific* meant *Marxist-Leninist*, since it was the ultimate science, but it also meant *scientific* and *scholarly*, since in Romanian there is no distinction between the two.

join together and claim a collective identity and, as a collective, call for resources and recognition, being in this manner much more influential than isolated individuals, or than those networks that Fainsod indicate to be operating 'under the surface'.[8] The main objective was to express themselves in the right language, the ideological language of the regime. I will show how they managed, after I give a brief account of the organizational goals that the Party applied when founding the Party History Institute.

4.2 The Institute as an ultimate instrument for historical propaganda

During the Second World War, the Romanian communist activists followed different trajectories: some of them remained clandestinely in Romania, facing prison terms during the authoritarian and fascist regimes that succeeded each other; others fled the country, joined their Soviet comrades and prepared for the formation of Romania as a Soviet satellite. These two collectives met in August 1944, when the Soviet tanks reached Bucharest and liberated the political prisoners from the fascist-run prisons. This meeting was between comrades who had very different training in ideology and political practices. During the war those activists who could join the Soviet Union were trained in propaganda work at the National Universities, Soviet institutions designed to educate the members of foreign communist organizations. Others, such as Mihai Roller, vice-director (and *de facto* director) of the Institute between 1955 and 1958, also followed courses at the Faculty of History at the University of Moscow.

The actual Stalinization of Romania took place in 1948, after some turbulent years of communist propaganda and violence against anti-communist intellectuals.[9] The RCP forced King Mihai Hohenzollern to abdicate

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[8] 'Family circles and mutual protection associations'; Fainsod, *How Russia is Ruled*, 237.
[9] Between 1944 and 1947, the Communist Party could observe the reaction of the intellectuals to the liberation of the countries by Soviet troops: some of them demonized the previous fascist regime; others were more detached and silent on political questions, while many expressed strongly nationalist views. The Communist youth members infiltrated the student unions, became hegemonic and quickly repressed their political enemies. See Lucian Boia, *Capcanele istoriei. Elita intelectuală românească între 1930 şi 1950* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2011). Stelian Tanase, *Elite şi societatea. Governarea Gheorghiu-Dej, 1948–1965* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2006), 165. See also Jan Sadlak, 'The use and abuse of the university: Higher Education in Romania 1860–1990', *Minerva* 29

on December 1947, and proclaimed the foundation of the Romanian Popular Republic. In 1948, Romania became a one-Party state under Romanian Workers' Party (RWP) control and Soviet influence. The sovereign Party incarnated the common good and controlled the state.

In order to consolidate its power, the Party used repressive forms of control and started to produce its own discourse.[10] The RWP created the Section for Propaganda and Agitation, which was directed from 1946 until 1953 by Iosif Chişinevschi, Leonte Răutu, Ofelia Manole, and Mihail Roller, who applied the Zhdanov doctrine[11] to the whole field of social science.[12] This Party organization was responsible for the regime's entire cultural politics. Its aim was to create a new civilization, with its own set of values – those elaborated by the Romanian émigrés in Moscow during the war years.[13] In August 1948, a new law on higher education was implemented. The idea, according to Party Secretary Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, was to abolish the previous form of higher education, considered bourgeois and reactionary, and to transform the universities into Party cadre graduate schools. The new law contributed to subjugating the universities' autonomy and to making the educational system an instrument of Party politics.[14]

(2/1991), 195–225, 205–206. Şerban Papacostea, 'Captive Clio: Romanian Historiography under Communist Rule', *European History Quarterly* 26 (1996), 181–208; 190–191.

[10] The 'notion of repression is quite inadequate for capturing what is precisely the productive aspect of power'; rather, the productive aspect of RWP's power shall be stressed: a new discourse. Paul Rabinow, *The Foucault Reader* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), 60–61.

[11] Andrei Zhdanov was the secretary of the CC of the Soviet Union Communist Party. His policy was to force the whole cultural production field to conform to the Party line and the personality cult. See Kees Boterbloem, *Life and Times of Andrei Zhdanov, 1896–1948* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2004).

[12] Tismăneanu, *Stalinism for all seasons*, 110.

[13] In the field of history-writing, the most important realization of the Section for Propaganda and Agitation was the synthesis of national history *Istoria României*, written by Mihai Roller and his close collaborators Gheorghe Georgescu, Vasile Maciu, Aurel Roman, Solomon Ştirbu, Gheorghe Ştefan and Dumitru Tudor, who were all propagandists, but with the help of interwar period historians Victor Cherestesiu and Barbu-Câmpina. Liviu Pleşa, 'Mihail Roller şi „stalinizarea" istoriografiei româneşti', *Annales Universitatis Apulensis Series Historica*, 10 (I/2006), 165-177; 168–169; Zub, *Orizont Inchis,* 41.

[14] '"Politically unreliable" academics, particularly members of the law and humanities faculties, were forced to retire or were dismissed from their positions. A substantial number of students were forced to drop their studies and more than 70 academics were imprisoned for allegedly political reasons at the end of the 1940s and the early 1950s'; Sadlak, 'The Use and Abuse of the University', 206.

These measures of control and repression helped to subjugate the whole intellectual field, and the entire Romanian society with it. By the end of 1948, the system imagined by the communist leadership became a reality. A large section of the Romanian population, those considered "hostile", was excluded from the future plans of the Party. Their property was confiscated and their access to material resources severely diminished, while the symbols of Romanian culture were shattered and denied. While the institutions of former "bourgeois" and "reactionary" education became dominated by communist activists, the Party's plan for the future was to expand its organizational base by greatly increasing and widening the Party membership. In theoretical terms, scientific and scholarly knowledge was deprived of its autonomy: "Truth" was defined by those in power and was not a matter for research. Therefore, autonomous scholarship was seen as reactionary and bourgeois, a mere vestige of the past, if not an enemy in the present. The sovereign power considered itself as the source of knowledge[15] – a unity of knowledge and power; there were objective limits to its undisputed power.

The tasks that the Party imposed on its activists were simply too burdensome for an organization that lacked both human resources and professional skills.[16] Many obstacles prevented the Propaganda and Agitation Department's activists from fulfilling the Party goals: 'taking into account the conditions of our country, we cannot yet fully implement these orders'.[17] The resources were scanty, and the goals of this sub-organization were simply unrealistic for a Party propaganda organization that had to make its main effort in the basic alphabetization process.[18]

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[15] Rabinow, *The Foucault Reader*, 60.

[16] Robert King, *History of the Romanian Communist Party* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1980), 68–69. The archival sources of the Agitation and Propaganda Section seem to confirm the previous studies: deficiencies in applying the Party's plan for propaganda were due to lack of resources, professional skills, and even in some cases due to corruption; see, for example, the reports from the regional Agitprops: ANIC, CC al PCR, Secția Propaganda și Agitație, 4/1950, f. 1: *Nota informativă n. 1 pentru Secția de Propaganda și Agitație* [*Informative Note n. 1 for the Section for Propaganda and Agitation*], f. 1–2; ANIC, ISISP, 1/1951, f. 7: *Informație cu privire la situația anului școlar în învațamântul de partid* [*Information regarding the situation of the school's year in the Party education*]; ff. 7–10, 32–34.

[17] ANIC, CC al PCR, Secția Propaganda și Agitație, 4/1950, f. 1: *Nota informativa n. 1 pentru Secția de Propaganda și Agitație [Informative Note n. 1 for the Section for Propaganda and Agitation],* f. 4.

[18] Ibidem.

In 1950, the Central Committee launched some new measures in order to improve by coordination[19] the realization of the Party plans.[20] Among these measures was the foundation of the Party History Institute in the first half of 1951. It had the express aim of assembling a history of the revolutionary movement and the Communist Party of Romania. The Institute's foundation was dictated by the need to collect and preserve the diverse sources on Party history spread around the country, and also the increasing need to raise the ideological level of the Party members.[21]

The main source of inspiration when shaping the new Institute was the corresponding Institute for the History of the Soviet Union Communist Party. The leadership of the Romanian Party, loyal in all aspects to the Soviets at that time, benefited from the experience of the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute of Moscow, the main point of reference for all similar institutes in the Soviet camp: 'in the Soviet Union there is the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute, which has a filial in the majority of the Republics'.[22] Its director, Vladimir Semenovic Kruzhkov,[23] was invited to Romania to supervise the Institute project in 1950.[24] The aims of these institutes were: to collect documents on the history of the Communist Party and the workers' movement in each republic; to edit monographs 'on the basis of the Short Course of the History of the Party'; 'the study of the history of the Party in that republic'; 'to study the revolutionary movement until the present times in that republic'; and, finally to translate 'the classics of Marxism-Leninism into the homeland language'.[25]

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[19] Narcis Popescu, 'Propagandă şi satelizare: Scoala Superioară de Ştiinte Sociale "A.A. Jdanov", 1948-1958', *Totalitarian Archives* (3–4/2010), 34–46.

[20] ANIC, ISISP, 1/1951, *Măsuri speciale ce se vor lua pentru întroducerea în viață a Hotărării CC în problema învățământului de partid* [*Special measures that will be taken to introduce the Decision of the CC in the problem of Party education*], ff. 11–12.

[21] ANIC, ISISP, A–1/2, vol. I, f. 1: *Referat asupra necesității înfințării Institutului de Istorie a Partidului* [*Report on the necessity to constitute an Institute for the History of the Party*].

[22] Ibidem.

[23] Vladimir Semenovic Kruzhkov was director of the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute between 1944 and 1949. From 1949 to 1955 he was first deputy head of the CC, and then head of the Department of Literature and Arts. See Kirill Tomoff, *Creative Union. The Professional Organization of Soviet Composers, 1939–1953* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006), 218. Ethan Pollok, *Stalin and the Soviet Science War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 22, 147.

[24] ANIC, ISISP, A–1/2, vol. I, f. 1: *Referat asupra necesității înfințării Institutului de Istorie a Partidului* [*Referat on the necessity to constitute a Institute for the History of the Party*].

[25] Ibid., f. 2.

The organizational scheme, in the planning documents, was divided into four sections (Archive, Editorial Board, Museum, and Library) and a technical service, for a total of 41 employees. The decision of creating the Institute was left in the hands of Leonte Răutu of the Agitation and Propaganda Section, and Dumitru Petrescu, at that time President of the National Assembly.[26] The Secretariat decision regarding the foundation of the Institute was made on 22 January 1951,[27] and the Institute was subordinated directly to the Agitation and Propaganda Section.[28] The actual organization of the Institute was organized in an archival section,[29] the Museum,[30] the Editorial Board,[31] and the Library,[32] for a total of 163 employees.[33]

[26] ANIC, CC al PCR, Secția Cancelarie, 135/1950, ff. 1–2.
[27] ANIC, ISISP, A–1/2, vol. II, f. 7–13: *Referat cu privire la Institutul de Istorie a Partidului de pe Lîngă CC al PCR* [*Referat regarding the Institute for the History of the Party of the CC of the RCP*]. See also ANIC, ISISP, A–1/2, vol. II, f. 29: *Referat cu privire la includerea Arhivei Centrale de Partid la Institutul de Istorie a Partidului de pe lângă CC al PCR* [*Referat regarding the inclusion of the Party Central Archive at the Institute of the CC of the RCP for the History of the Party*].
[28] ANIC, ISISP, A–2/1, vol. I, f. 17: *Regulamentul de functionare al Institutul de Istorie a Partidului de pe lângă CC al PCR* [*Rules of functioning of the Institute for the History of the Party*].
[29] The section was divided into six sectors, two services, and two laboratories for document conservation and restoration. The sector division reflected the general aim to produce a workers' movement and Party history: 'Archival sector of the revolutionary movement until 1917', '[…] until 23 August 1944', […] after 23 August 1944', a sector for the communist youth organization ('UTC and UTM'), a 'sector for the archival funds of the democratic and antifascist mass organizations', and, finally, a 'sector for the search and organization of sources'. ANIC, ISISP, A–2/1, vol. I, f. 14–15.
[30] The Museum *Moments in the revolutionary fight of the people* was placed under the control of the Institute. The museum was given a new name (*Museum of the revolutionary fight of the people of the Romanian Popular Republic*) and also an expanded scope with more emphasis on the role of the workers' movement. ANIC, ISISP, A–1/2, vol.I, f. 3: *Hotarire privitor la crearea Institutului de Istorie a Partidului* [*Decision regarding the creation of the Institute for the History of the Party*]. The Museum section had to organize the V. I. Lenin – I. V. Stalin Museum, and the different museums subordinated to the Institute: the Permanent Exhibition I. V. Stalin, the Museum 'Revolutionary Fight of the People', the Permanent Exhibition 'Heroic Fights of the railway workers 1933–1953', and Doftana, the former prison for political prisoners which was turned into the Doftana Museum. It also had to organize local and regional exhibitions. It also had the aim of organizing propaganda of the antifascist activities arranged by the Party in the interwar period. ANIC, ISISP, A–2/1, vol. I, f. 12.
[31] Originally planned with the aim of translating the classics of Marxism-Leninism into the Romanian language and also into the languages of other nationalities existing in Romania, it was divided into 13 sectors, each studying a specific problem of the workers' movement and the Party. Five sectors were dedicated to the study of the historical periods defined by the periodization in Roller's historical synthesis: one sector for 1868–

The scientific council, according to the decision, was composed of the top-elite of the Party and key persons in the Propaganda Section.[34] The implicit task for the Institute was to replicate and improve the canon elaborated in 1946 in the synthesis of national history *Istoria României*, written by Mihai Roller and his close collaborators.[35] This work was a Soviet-style version of Romanian history, presenting national history as part of the canon of class struggle and the primacy of the Slavic element. This synthesis was, between 1947 and 1960, the only historical work on Romania's history that was allowed in the historiographical field.[36]

1917, one for 1917–1929, one for 1929–1933, one for 1934–1944, and one for the history after 23 August 1944. In addition, one sector was given the task to write the history of the 'unmasking' of imperialist interventions in Romania, one sector was dedicated to important historical characters, one to the production of regional-local monographs, one to acquiring bibliography and censor articles, lectures, etc. on the history of the Party, one to economical and statistical problems, and, finally, one sector for the timeline and anniversaries of the Party. There were also two supportive services: editing and translations. ANIC, ISISP, A–2/1, vol. I, f. 14–15.

[32] It hosted the essential bibliography for the work of the historians and the museographers. ANIC, ISISP, A–2/1, vol. I, f. 8. See also A–2/1, Vol. I: *Referat pentru reorganizarea bibliotecilor care depînd de Institutul de Istorie a Partidului de pe lângă CC al PCR* [*Referat for the reorganization of the libraries that depends on the Institute for History of the Party*], ff. 18–21.

[33] ANIC, ISISP, A–2/1, Vol. X, *Regulament*, f. 10.

[34] Among them were the most prominent Romanian communists: Party General Secretary Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, foreign minister Ana Pauker, minister of finance Vasile Luca, and minister of interior Teohari Georgescu. Furthermore, all the top-level propagandists were involved: the head of the Agitation and Propaganda Section Iosif Chișinevschi, the Secretary of the CC for organizational matters Alexandru Moghioroș, *Scînteia* chief editor Sorin Toma, CC members Gheorghe Apostol, Constantin Pârvulescu, Ion Niculi, Gheorghe Stoica, and top-propagandists Leonte Răutu, Mihail Roller, and Aurel G. Vaida.

[35] They were the propagandists Gheorghe Georgescu, Vasile Maciu, Aurel Roman, Solomon Știrbu, Gheorghe Ștefan and Dumitru Tudor, and interwar period historians Victor Cherestesiu and Barbu-Câmpina. Pleșa, 'Mihail Roller și „stalinizarea"; 168–169; Zub, *Orizont Inchis,* 41.

[36] The basic tenet of the canon forced historiography to adopt the notion of class struggle as the prime force leading historical evolution: social conflicts became the core of a decontextualized and falsified history. The goal of this historiography was basically to devalue the myths and symbols of Romanian national ideology in order to substitute them with positive mythical and symbolical elements attributed to the Soviet Union, to Russia, and to Slavic influence. These two meta-narrative canons' *ostinatos* (class struggle and the primacy of the Slavs) made it necessary to present the main personalities of interwar national history as class exploiters. For example, Michael the Brave, who in interwar historiography was considered the first national unifier of Romania in 1600, was depicted by the *Istoria României* as a representative of the imperial power of Rudolph II. The national heroes of 1848, whose alliance with tsarist Russia was considered a positive factor, were remembered accordingly: Nicolae Bălcescu was de-

This kind of scholarship had simply no autonomy, since its legitimacy came from the political capital of the Party, not from any scholarly autonomy, which in the Stalinist discourse had no positive meaning. Scholarly standards were simply not a concern of the Institute: the Party orders and directives were. The Institute, in its plans, was a propaganda organization, pure and simple. Nevertheless, conflicts within the Institute and between the Institute and the communist-led Romanian Academia existed, as well as top-level political conflicts that had certain consequences for the Institute. Let us consider why they existed, how they were presented, which alliances were formed, and which strategies of representation their actors employed in order to succeed in these conflicts.

scribed as a positive, progressive example since he allied with Russia, while Avram Iancu, who allied with the Hapsburgs, was considered a counterrevolutionary. The role of the churches in national history was minimized. The Transylvanian School (*Şcoala Ardeleană*), a late eighteenth century cultural movement composed of historians and philologists, considered linked to the Greek Catholic Church banned in 1948, was accused by Roller of having obscured the beneficial Russian influence on Romanian culture, and therefore was renamed by Roller *Şcoala Latinistă* (*Latinist School*). Important symbolic events, like the union of the Principalities in 1859, were considered as representing working-class progress, not national progress. The political views of the Soviet Union on Romania were adopted as historiographical tenets: contemporary history started with the October revolution. Since this history was teleological, all the actions of the workers' movement and the RCP were emphasised beyond their true importance. Making reference to the theses of the 5th Congress of the RCP (December 1930), the national unification in 1918 was questioned: the union of Bessarabia with Romania was considered as an imperialist intervention against the Bolshevik revolution, while the incorporation of Transylvania was seen as an intervention against the Hungarian Bolshevik Revolution of March 1919. At the same time, this kind of historiography was also dependent on the political theses of the Romanian Workers' Party. The recent history of Romania was presented as follows: on 23 August 1944 the Soviet army liberated Romania from imperialism. Transylvania was restituted to Romania with the help of the Soviet Union; the economic cooperation between Romania and the Soviet Union was beneficial for Romania; all the positive aspects of the Treaty of Paris regarding Romania were due to Soviet help, while all the negative implications were due to the imperialist powers. The role of the monarchy and the interwar political parties was considered as reactionary – at this time, the fight against the monarchy and the interwar parties was still in process. See Pleşa, 169–170.

4.3 The consequences of the Party struggles
for the Institute's composition: 1952

In order to achieve a better historical understanding of the changes within the Institute, an analysis that considers the networks' conflicts is necessary. The dynamics of those struggles, far from happening in a closed system, have been to a high degree influenced and sometimes determined by political changes at national and international level. In the Stalinist context, the quest for political legitimacy was inside the Party and, as I will show, every possible rhetorical stratagem was used to achieve power, to present the rivals as "deviationists" or to switch position in favour of the hegemonic network. The networks' conflicts show all these dynamics, which influenced the development of the Party discourse on its history.

Most of the internal police reports and diplomatic documents until 1952 considered Ana Pauker and Iosif Chişinevschi the most powerful communists in Romania,[37] and not Gheorghiu-Dej. Pauker was the head of the Romanian émigrés in Moscow during the war, while Chişinevschi was a member of the Political Bureau from 1948 and one of Gheorghiu-Dej's closest collaborators.

Ana Pauker was the leading figure of the "Muscovite' faction" together with Vasile Luca and Teohari Georgescu.[38] Pauker had considerable power, partly given by her Soviet protectors and by the favour that Stalin personally attributed to her, but she also very capably increased her own influence over the Romanian communist milieu. As many witnesses remember, she was popular and even loved, while Gheorghiu-Dej clearly was not.[39] Gheorghiu-Dej, a Romanian railway worker who had spent 12 years of his life in Romania's fascist-run prisons, was practically unknown at the beginning of his political career. He succeeded in becoming General Secretary of the Party because Stalin, after 1945, preferred to have an ethnic and working-class Romanian at the head of the Party.[40] Even Ana Pauker suggested that,

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[37] Cristian Vasile, *Politice Culturale Comuniste în timpul regimul Gheorghiu-Dej* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2011), 20–21. Vasile, analysing the relevance of the propaganda organization, has noted that the cultural politics between the instauration of the republic and the death of Stalin were 'under the sign of integral Stalinism', and that only after 1952 did the relevance of Gheorghiu-Dej appear evident. Ibidem.

[38] Tismăneanu, *Stalinism for all seasons*, 118.

[39] Robert Levy, *Ana Pauker: The Rise and Fall of a Jewish Communist* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 76, 78, 85–86.

[40] Deletant, *Communist Terror in Romania*, 168.

being herself a woman of Jewish origin, the development of the Party in Romania would benefit more from Gheorghiu-Dej's leadership. The cult of Gheorghiu-Dej, in practice, was constructed by those that Dej himself would later shatter, imprison or subjugate once they constituted obstacles to his absolute grip on power.

The Soviet leadership trusted and empowered the small network of Bessarabians and Jews that, from top positions, influenced the composition and the direction of the propaganda policies.[41] The "Muscovites" and the Bessarabian and Jewish comrades had in fact been trained together in Moscow at the Leninist Comintern School,[42] and during the Second World War, had been working together at the secret Romanian Comintern Section in Moscow[43] to build brigades of Romanian volunteers. This network included the leadership (Pauker-Luca-Georgescu), top-level propagandists like Leonte Răutu, and seconds-in-command like Roller. They had known and trusted each other since before the communist takeover in Romania, and consequently formed an invisible, but ever-present, power network within the Communist Party.

The names of these persons recur in the internal documents of the Institute, and their decisions were at the core of the Institute's activities. The influence of Ana Pauker in the foundation of the Institute is evidenced by her connections to the "model" Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute in Moscow, being part of that institute during the summer of 1944. However, the documents do not show any clear indication of connections between Institute members and the "autochthonous" or the "Muscovite" networks. Information concerning this matter can be observed only indirectly by a thorough analysis of the political changes and their consequences for the staff composition at the Institute. Archival documents, in this regard, are completely silent. There is, however, some evidence of the ethnic composition of the Institute.[44]

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[41] Tismaneanu, *Stalinism for all seasons*, 125.

[42] Ibid., 79.

[43] The official name of the secret Romanian Comintern Section in Moscow was "Institute n. 205"; Levy, 69.

[44] For example, a list of the employees of the Institute stating their nationality was typed in 1958, showing an equal number of Romanians and Jews together with one single Hungarian. ANIC, ISISP, A–2/1, Vol. V, *Tabel cu personalul ştiintific al Institutului* [*Table with the scientific personal of the Institute*] ff. 8–12. "Jewish" was considered to be a nationality by the Romanian census after 1918.

At the foundation of the Institute, the distribution of seats in the first scientific council favoured the Pauker network, which had nine of the 13 seats. Among these, Alexandru Moghioroş and A. G. Vaida, Party members during the interwar period,[45] were also Luca's protégés.[46] This means that the "Muscovites" in theory had the power to control the History Institute. In practice, however, the scientific council did not make any decisions concerning the Institute: these were left to the Propaganda Section, where the nine "Muscovite" members of the council had top-level positions. This should not lead to the conclusion that the Propaganda Section, or the Institute, were divided into competing networks with different goals. The struggle among networks was a struggle for power, but the aim of the Party's propaganda organization was singular, namely to fulfil the propagandistic goals of the regime, replacing national culture with Stalinist culture. In order to do so, the propaganda machine had to be improved, and the activists were required to enhance the level of their ideological preparation. Despite being part of different networks, all the members of these institutions worked for this common goal. The Institute was part of this strategy, and any hypothetical redistribution of positions according to "faction" logic should not be seen as an ideological contraposition, but rather as a coexistence of networks of activists with different backgrounds, but with a singular and commonly declared goal. As long as the coexistence between those networks was peaceful, these differences did not matter much. However, when Gheorghiu-Dej obtained approval from Stalin to eliminate the rival network, identified by Stalin himself as the "Pauker group", sham trials were organized in 1952 against Pauker, Luca and Georgescu, resulting in their imprisonment and political obliteration.

The formal accusations against "rightist deviationists" and "factionalists" were used indiscriminately against political opponents also at the Institute, as the case of Clara Cuşnir-Mihailovici, first director of the Institute, clearly shows. Cuşnir-Mihailovici had been a member of the Romanian Communist Party since its foundation in 1921, and was later active in its émigré community in Moscow.[47] Being one of the Party founders and a fervent

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[45] See Inventory of "Colectia Dosare de partid ale membrilor de partid cu stagiul din ilegalitate care au incetat din viată, available on http://www.arhivelenationale.ro /images/custom/image/serban/2012/ianuarie%20inventare%20bac/colectia%20dosare%2 0de%20partid%20final.pdf

[46] Tismaneanu, *Stalinism for all Seasons*, 130.

[47] The presence of a "Muscovite" woman as first director of the Institute is noted by Marian Ştefan, an historian who met her later, in the 1960s, when she was directing the

Stalinist, her faith expressed by her admiration for Leonte Răutu,[48] she was seen as the perfect person to direct an Institute researching the Party history in Soviet Stalinist Romania. Her opinions were in fact directly informed by Soviet propaganda,[49] as all the Bessarabians knew Russian well and spoke it among themselves, believing that it was *the* language of Marxism and the new civilization.[50]

After May 1952, however, Ana Pauker was removed from the public scene. Her numerous official portraits in public and Party offices were taken down, and her name was erased even from the official documents on the foundation of the Institute. Despite the fact that Cuşnir-Mihailovici was considered a "Muscovite", she did not lose her position in consequence of Pauker's fall. Instead, she continued to operate as director of the Institute and contributed to the enhancement of the personality cult of Gheorghiu-Dej, even though she had previously been supported by Ana Pauker. Cuşnir-Mihailovici obviously wanted to signal to the higher cadres that she distanced herself from Ana Pauker, having served as Director when the "Muscovites" were in leading positions and having promoted *their* propaganda.[51]

In order to avoid being purged herself, she had to start a witch-hunt within the Institute, where one–third of the staff lost their positions in 1952–1953.[52] This purge was also conducted on a general level in the Party apparatus, with an ethnocentric and anti-Semitic element. However, it is difficult to see whether the purged employees of the Institute actually

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Museum of History. His memoir is one of the very few sources on Cuşnir-Mihailovici's biography: '[she] was a Bessarabian from Bălți, former instructor of the Comintern, spoke bad and low-quality Romanian, and showed the Soviet education that she had received (they said that she had studied at the university, but it's hard for me to believe it); […] she stands by the men subordinated to her and she defends them assiduously'. Marian Ştefan, *Trăite, Văzute, Auzite*, 8.

[48] Tismaneanu, *Lumea Secretă a nomenclaturii*, 207.

[49] ANIC, ISISP, A–13/2, f. 16: Lista [List].

[50] Tismaneanu, *Lumea Secretă a nomenclaturii*, 34.

[51] For example, one of the two scholarly events she had organized was a conference arranged by Vasile Luca. ANIC, ISISP, A–6/1, f. 254: *Raport asupra activității Institutului de Istorie a Partidului de pe lânga CC al PMR pe anul 1951, 17–XII–1951* [*Report on the activities of the Party History Institute in 1951*], f. 225.

[52] See ANIC, ISISP, A–2/1, Vol. II, *Tabel al salariațiilor Institutului de Istorie a Partidului* [*Table of the Party History Institute employees*], ff. 4–5; ANIC, ISISP, A–2/1, Vol. III, *Schema personalului existent* [*Scheme of the existing personnel*], ff. 26–30.

belonged to the ethnic minorities.[53] What is clear, though, is that the director, of Jewish "nationality", was able to keep her position, and I assume that this was a due to her willingness to take part in the purges of the Institute.

The purges of the history section's members were prompted by concerns expressed by the director in her reports on unskillful activists unable to do their tasks, but were framed as ideological critiques.[54] Those who were removed from the Institute had suffered this fate, officially, 'in consequence of the de-masking and destruction of rightist deviations',[55] a purge that in total removed one-third of the Institute's employees. It is worth noting that the purges implemented by the Party section at the Institute (*organizația de bază*) exclusively targeted women, possibly because they had weaker political protection.[56] The archival documents do not state explicitly who was purged at the Institute in consequence of the accusations against Pauker. However, analysing the personnel composition schemes of 1952 and 1953, it is possible to see that of the 34 employees reported in the scheme of 1952, 11 (one-third) of them were absent in 1953.[57] These inter-

[53] "Jewish" was considered a nationality in communist Romania, reported in personal documents.
[54] Cușnir-Mihailovici mentions Viorica David, who 'has now a higher level of ideological and political profile and has developed her capacity to orient herself in the problems. Her sense of duty increased. […] Out of the orders that she accomplishes [regularly], also the help she gets in the work from the direction and from the collective, we think that to her process of development contributes also the functions she accomplishes at the cathedra [of the Party High School] and at the evening university'. The director quotes also other activists of the Editorial Board, underlining positive and negative comments: Costache 'likes the works that he does' but '[his] critical spirit is really poorly developed and in addition he lacks combativeness'. He gives 'demonstrations of convenience, an employee-spirit. He has some small-bourgeois habits, which he must get rid of. […] This situation must be solved urgently'. A practical criticism was directed towards Viorica David, who manifested an incapacity to work with colleagues, and an ideological one towards Petruș, accused of not being self-critical enough. ANIC, ISISP, A-6/1, f. 225: *Raport de activitate a Redacției Institutului de Istorie a Partidului pe anul 1952, 20-II-1952* [*Report on the activities of the Party History Institute in 1951*].
[55] Ibid., f. 247.
[56] According to the account of Ion Bulei, the Institute 'has been created with not-so-well prepared researchers, it was composed mainly of the wives of communist activists that worked elsewhere. Their husbands also brought the wives […] especially [in Gheorghiu-Dej era]', but this informal policy continued also during the Ceaușescu era. Interview with Ion Bulei, 12th February 2013. Translation by the author.
[57] The absent names are: lecturers Gross Maria, Tărăboi Natalia, Mogoșanu Elvira, Radu Georgeta; scientific collaborators Liveanu Dorel and Iosipovici Lotty; the librarian of the Party's Museum Cohen Martha; dactylographer Nicoale Angela; and librarians Micu Elena, Caraman Georgeta, and Bădeț Elena. See ANIC, ISISP, A-2/1, Vol. II, *Tabel al salariaților Institutului de Istorie a Partidului* [*Table of the Party History Institute*

nal purges were dictated by the need to join the campaign launched at top level by the Party leadership, and Cuşnir-Mihailovici exploited them to her own advantage: first, to counter any potential suspicion among the control cadres of any link between the "Rightist deviationists" and herself; second, to remove unwanted employees connected to the Pauker faction ('shameful and inappropriate elements')[58] who were now left without protection; and third, to fill these vacated positions with reliable allies in the struggle for resources against competing networks.

Despite some cases of continued "loyalty" to Pauker,[59] the whole leadership and top-level bureaucrats of the Party turned against her and became the strongest accusers of the "Muscovites", even though they had been their former protégées.[60]

The purge did not cause the removal of the leading members of the Institute and the most prominent researchers. But after the purge, the same kind of ideological accusations used against the leaders of the "Muscovites" became a weapon used by the director of the Institute, indicating to the Agitation and Propaganda Section the employees that she considered unworthy in order to have them removed from the Institute.

4.4 The attempts to professionalize the Institute in power structure conflicts, 1951–1954

The interpretation of the Institute as merely a Party organization dependent on the outcomes of top-level political struggles no doubt has its merits, but also has certain limits. This interpretation does not consider the conflicts that ultimately led to the failure of the Institute to fulfil its goals, but only their eventual result, the failure itself. The political dynamics certainly offer

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employees], ff. 4–5; ANIC, ISISP, A-2/1, Vol. III, *Schema personalului existent* [*Scheme of the existing personnel*], ff. 26–30.

[58] '…shameful and inappropriate elements were eliminated from this institute and the social composition of the cadres of this institute has been improved'; ANIC, ISISP, A-6/1, f. 242: *Raport de activitate al Institutului de Istorie a Partidului de pe lângă CC al PMR pe anul 1952, 19-II-1953* [*Report on the activity of the Party History Institute in 1952*], f. 242.

[59] An example is Ana Toma, a very close friend and collaborator of Pauker. At first she refused to take down Pauker's portrait from the wall in her office at the Foreign Ministry – but she soon changed her mind understanding that opposition was impossible. R. Levy, 233.

[60] Tismăneanu, *Stalinism for all seasons*, 128–133.

the possibility to introduce a case of micro-history into the "bigger picture" – but where is the agency of the Institute and its members in this picture? Between 1951 and 1954, the director of the Institute requested with increasing insistence the professionalization of the cadres, but only in 1955 did the regime endorse it as a new feature of cultural strategy. If the Institute had no agency, as previous research claims, how can it be explained that it insisted so much when asking for resources? Were these requests goals or means to an end? In the pages that follow, the trend towards this specific professionalization is considered in the context of the struggle of individuals, networks, and groups for the control of the institutions for history-writing, particularly in one specific organization, the Party History Institute, which had a role in the process of gradual redirection of cultural politics away from dogmatic Soviet Stalinism.

In the process of professionalization, university graduates and Party school graduates were given the same value, since the curricula of both were equalized in Stalinist times and were more or less similar, even though the Party school became fully integrated with the national education system only in the 1960s – but both Party and state education belonged to the same centralised system of manpower planning after 1948.[61] From 1951 the Party School offered two-year programs in the history of the Party and universal history, later extended into three-year courses.[62] These programs were considered equivalent to the four-year education in history required by the former-bourgeois universities,[63] and, when in 1966 the Party school was turned

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[61] J. Sadlak, 'The Use and Abuse of the University', 206.

[62] D. Cătănus, *Enciclopedia Regimului Comunist*, 37–38, entry "Academia Ştefan Gheorghiu".

[63] Titu Georgescu, a historian who graduated from the university, claims that still in Stalinist times the Roller manual 'was not recommended at the faculty, by hardly any professor' (Georgescu, *Tot un fel de istorie*, 181); but at the same time he admits that Rollerism was an unavoidable trend for whoever studied at the faculties of history, since it was strongly supported by Roller's network (for example Barbu-Câmpina, Vasile Maciu, and Emil Condurachi) (ibid., 39, 181–183); According to Apostol Stan, who attended the Faculty of History of the University of Bucharest between 1952 and 1957, contemporary universal history at the university was 'ultra-politicized and totally Sovietized' (Stan, *Istorie şi politica*, 40). Despite Georgescu's claims, Stan's picture of the Romanian faculties of history shows that the Party-interpreted Marxist-Leninist principles were those leading the history education. Nevertheless, Stan also provides an example of traces of openness at the Faculty, namely the circulation of typed manuscripts of prohibited works that circulated among students, as was the case for the History of Romanian Culture and Literature by G. Călinescu, professor at the faculty of philology (ibid., 39); but all the courses were taught according to Soviet manuals 'translated and copied' (ibid., 41), and the control over the teaching and the "atmosphere" of

into the *Academia de Științe Sociale și Politice*, the history programs were extended to four years, and were given the authority to confer doctoral degrees.[64]

According to Roger Markwick, the bureaucratization of historical research had two aims: first, to establish political control over the history discipline and, second, 'to ensure that history remained in step with the socio-economic needs of Soviet society as determined by the Party leadership'.[65] But, as Markwick noted, analysing the Soviet history-writing milieu, this bureaucratization resulted in more structural disobedience of history-writing when historians deviated from the Party orders, causing the production and distribution of historiography in the Soviet Union to become a double, parallel system of centres of research and education competing with each other for resources.[66] Markwick considers that most of the tension was 'professional':[67] in fact the main tension existed between the professional historians (which Markwick calls 'intellectuals of quality') and the unqualified Party officials ('intellectuals of scope')[68] inside the Soviet Academy's History Institute.[69] The 'intellectuals of scope', attracted to the

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the faculty was under the strict surveillance of the iron-Stalinist rector Florența Rusu and the entire Party section of the university (ibid., 41–44).

[64] Ibid., 39.

[65] Roger R. Markwick, *Rewriting History in Soviet Russia. The Politics of Revisionist Historiography, 1956–1974* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001), 63. The professionalization of historians in the Soviet Union was a process beginning with the Twentieth Congress in 1956 as a scholarly attempt to eradicate Stalinism from the humanities. In 1961, with the Twentieth-Second Congress, this process continued in the name of the transition from socialism to communism.

[66] Ibidem.

[67] Ibidem, 64.

[68] Ibidem.

[69] Ibidem, 64: 'Tensions between the "intellectuals of quality" and the (pseudo) "intellectuals of scope" were equally pronounced within the Institute of History during these years. These tensions derived from the fact that, as often as not, Party membership was a path to a privileged *nomenklatura* position, such as the head of the sector or institute director. Furthermore, during the 1950s the relatively high salaries of the researchers in the Academy of Sciences encouraged many poorly qualified *partrabotniki* (Party officials) to seek sinecures as researchers at the Institute of History. Such *bezdelniki* (good-for-nothings) not only debased scholarship but fostered suspicion and uncertainty within the institute. Feeling threatened as they did by the emergence of serious scholarship after the Twentieth Congress, the "Party critics" set themselves up as overseers of genuine researchers. This powerful network of Party "incompetents" who administered the arts and sciences was, according to Aleksandr Nekrich, one of the "most important props of the Soviet regime". According to him, in 1958 Nikolay Sidorov, then director of the Institute of History, fell foul of this "mafia". His replacement as director, Vladimir Mikhailovich Khvostov, used this mafia of *bezdelniki* to police the institute'.

Academy's History Institute by the high salaries, were a powerful network, a 'mafia'[70] that the directors could not get rid of. This characterisation implies that the positions of the researchers in one environment was not simply decided by the leadership, but also by the presence of networks.

At the Institute, professional conflicts between proper historians and activists took place in a minor tone and only in a subsequent period. In this period, the conflicts were between the Party History Institute and the History Institute of the Academy. The director of the Institute, Clara Cuşnir-Mihailovici, often complained to the Propaganda Department about the staff's lack of proper education. In 1951, among 163 employees, only two had completed higher education.[71] One year later, two of the employees had 'history faculty' listed in their curricula,[72] while some had graduated in other disciplines.[73] For the rest, half of them had only primary education, while the other half had high school education.[74] We only know the origins of one of them for certain, historian Nora Munteanu, who was a Party veteran, but there is no clear evidence as to the reason for their assignment to the Institute.

Cuşnir-Mihailovici stressed, in her reports to the Agitprop, that achieving the goal to turn the Institute into a 'scientific [*ştiinţific*] Marxist-Leninist institution'[75] was made difficult by the lack of experience of the organization and the lack of educated cadres. She advocated the professionalization of the Institute, while officially advocating the principle of "scientificity"

[70] Ibidem.
[71] Lotty Iosipovici had graduated in literature and was employed as a scientific collaborator, while Emil Oniţă, graduated in chemistry, was employed as a lecturer at the Party Graduate School. "Scientific Collaborators" meant external specialists enrolled by the sectors of the Institute on specific problems, to produce individual or collective works. The sector chiefs were responsible for the scientific collaborators. ANIC, ISISP, A-2/1, Vol. X, *Regulament*, f. 10.
[72] Nora Munteanu and Ioan Burtoi. In ANIC, ISISP, A-2/1 vol. II, f. 5: *Tabel al salariaţilor Institutului de Istorie a Partidului* [*Table of the employed at the Party History Institute*].
[73] Teodora David (pedagogy), Cecilia Răican (from the Institute of Economic Studies and Planning), Barbu Chiţu (forestry). Ibidem.
[74] Among the other employees, those enrolled in 1951–1952 as lecturers were Dinu Luca, David Teodora, Oniţă Emil, Gross Maria, Elena Iancu, Podoleanu Lucreţia, Răican Cecilia, Tănăsescu Camelia, Tărăboi Natalia, Mocanu Geta, Vişan Elena, Burtoi Ioan, Sandu Dumitru, Chiţu Barbu, Mogoşanu Elvira, Munteanu Nora, Liveanu Dorel. In Ibidem.
[75] ANIC, ISISP, A-2/6, f. 4: *Referat asupra activităţii Institutului de Istorie a Partidului de pe lângă CC al PCR pe anul 1951* [*Referat on the activities of the Institute for the History of the Party for the year 1951*].

professed in Stalinist ideology, asking for a group of scholarly [științific] collaborators composed of activists from other institutes'.[76] But, according to Cușnir-Mihailovici, the Institute was left 'in systematic isolation' from the other Party sub-organizations, which considered it to be an un-rewarding burden that pretended the sacrifice of their time and resources in order to help it complete its tasks, in the name of Party solidarity.[77]

Furthermore, the three Party schools,[78] composed of cadres trained in Moscow during the interwar years and uneducated Party veterans, having direct contact with aspiring youths, could easily manage to recruit their former students as teachers, leaving the Institute in no position to receive trained propagandists.[79] Cușnir-Mihailovici's complaints met with little success,[80] except for the creation of a Party Section in the Institute with the limited scope to teach Russian to the employees.[81]

Cușnir-Mihailovici considered that the responsibility for the failures of the Institute should be attributed to the Agitation and Propaganda Section, and in particular to Mihail Roller, who had left the Institute in chronic isolation. Cușnir-Mihailovici complained: 'the lack of help from the Section was sorely felt among the cadres and external collaborators, and delayed the solving of some urgent problems'.[82] Therefore, Cușnir-Mihailovici decided to report Roller to the director of the Agitprop, Lonte Răutu. Cușnir-Mihailovici accused Roller of having left the Institute in isolation – namely,

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[76] Ibidem.

[77] ANIC, ISISP, A-6/1, f. 254: *Raport asupra activității Institutului de Istorie a Partidului de pe lângă CC al PMR pe anul 1951, 17-XII-1951* [*Report on the activities of the Party History Institute in 1951*], f. 257.

[78] I am referring to the "Ștefan Gheorghiu" Party Graduate School (formerly the Workers' University), the school for Party ideologists and propagandists, and the "A. A. Zhdanov" High School. See Mihai Dinu Gheorghiu, *Intelectualii în cîmpul puterii*, 92.

[79] Ibidem, 93.

[80] She wrote: 'although the Agitation and Propaganda Section of the CC decided during the school year that from the Social Sciences' Graduate School "A.A. Zhdanov" we should have received many more graduates, *and among them the most prepared* [my emphasis], at the end of the school year, not a single graduate with poor preparation was assigned [*repartizat*]'; ANIC, ISISP, A-6/1, f. 242: *Raport de activitate al Institutului de Istorie a Partidului de pe lângă CC al PMR pe anul 1952, 19-II-1953* [*Report on the activity of the Party History Institute in 1952*]. ff. 246–247. "At the same time, from the Faculty of History, Philosophy, Philology, Political Economy and the "Maxim Gorki" Institute 15 graduates were planned for the Institute, but at their actual allocation not a single graduate came'. Ibidem, f. 247.

[81] 'In 1952, the Institute helped a number of institutes, organizations and press organs in their work. Ibidem.

[82] Ibid., f. 249.

of having allocated to the Institute only one Party graduate, and not forwarding the help promised by the Social Science High School "A. A. Zhdanov". The Agitprop instituted a Scientific Council at the Institute in order to ameliorate the situation described by Cușnir-Mihailovici,[83] but this did not bring about the desired changes.

In order to understand the Institute's marginalization, the analysis must shift from the organizational dimension and the political conflicts at top level to a network analysis of the conflict existing at the political level. The main reason why the Institute did not receive resources from the central organization was its marginalization by Mihail Roller, and the consequent reaction of Cușnir-Mihailovici. The work of the Institute was a potential threat to Roller's monopoly on history, while Cușnir-Mihailovici was persisting in her intention to create a fully functional organization. These conflicts are seen by C. B. Iacob and by S. Stoica, as combined actions by different networks, motivated by different reasons, against Roller's monopoly on history-writing.[84] Only one article by Simina Bădincă[85] addresses this conflict explicitly, but loses somehow the general picture provided by Iacob and Stoica on the dynamics of the field of history-writing.

However, new sources recently available from the ISISP archives contribute to a better understanding of these conflicts. The conflict between, on one side Cușnir-Mihailovici and, on the other, Vasile Varga, A.G. Vaida and Mihail Roller, centred on the institutional attribution of competence to the Party History Museum. Created in 1947, the museum presented the basic narrative of Roller's historical synthesis, and it was directly managed by the Agitation and Propaganda Section. In 1951, its management was relocated to the Institute. Roller thereby lost a powerful instrument through which he could develop his propaganda narrative, in favour of Cușnir-Mihailovici who could now redirect the museum's narrative giving more weight to the Romanian workers' movement.[86] Roller found it hard to accept this new allocation of resources that threatened his monopoly in the field of Party historiography.

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[83] ANIC, ISISP, A-4/1, f. 52: *Referat, 1 September 1953*.
[84] Ibidem; Iacob, *Stalinism, Historians, and the Nation*, 128. While Stoica mentions expressly the conflict between Roller and Cușnir-Mihailovici; Stoica, 48.
[85] Simina Bădica, 'The Revolutionary Museum: Curating the Museum of Communist Party History in Romania (1948–1958)', *Historical Yearbook* X (2013), 95–109.
[86] ANIC, ISISP, A-1/2, vol.I, f. 3: *Hotarire privitor la crearea Institutului de Istorie a Partidului* [*Decision regarding the creation of the Institute for the History of the Party*].

The first sign of the conflict over the attribution of the Museum can be found in a letter written in August 1952 by Cușnir-Mihailovici, addressed to the General Direction of Affairs of the Council of Ministers. She complained that the newly-created Scientific Commission for Museums, Historical and Artistic Monuments was managed by the Romanian Academy, and that the Institute had been left out.[87] Thus, she attempted to make the General Direction reconsider the composition of the commission, in order to add a representative from the Institute.[88]

Aurel G. Vaida was director of the Museum from its creation in 1948, and was also in charge of organizing the Doftana Museum; Roller gave him these positions. His work at the Institute was criticized by Cușnir-Mihailovici in her reports to the Agitation and Propaganda Section in 1953, where she accused him of being an obstacle when the 'inappropriate elements' were purged in 1952.[89] The criticism against Vaida's 'lack of vigilance' was symptomatic of deficient ideological preparation and consequently a proof of lack of trust in the Party. For Cușnir-Mihailovici it was both probable and desirable that Vaida's proximity to Vasile Luca would result, with this accusation, in his ruin. Her numerous reports on Vaida's alleged 'command methods and non-constructive criticisms' eventually succeeded in 1953 in obtaining the removal of Vaida from his position as director of the Museum.[90]

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[87] 'Our Institute had not any representative in this commission and it was not consulted during the drawing up of the documents regarding the good functioning of the museums'. ANIC, ISISP, A-13/2, f. 280: *Referat la adresa Direcției generale a treburilor Consiliului de Miniștri, 1-8-1952* [*Referat to the General Direction of the Affairs of the Council of the Ministers, 1-8-1952*].

[88] Ibidem. The conflict with Roller over the attribution of the Museum is signalled by Cușnir-Mihailovici, who wrote that the decision did not mention the functioning of the relationship between museums, founding institutions and the '"The Scientific Council" of the Academia R. P. R.', where Roller was director.

[89] 'In the collective there was also demonstrated a lack of vigilance and responsibility reflected by the fact that the inappropriate elements sneaking into the Institute had not been discovered and removed. When it came to the liquidation of these elements, the work methods of the responsible person in the collective, comrade Vaida, constituted an obstacle. Manifestations of command methods and non-constructive criticism have slowed down the initiative and the criticism from below'; ANIC, ISISP, A-6/1, f. 242: *Raport de activitate al Institutului de Istorie a Partidului de pe lângă CC al PMR pe anul 1952, 19-II-1953* [*Report on the activity of the Party History Institute in 1952*], f. 245.

[90] ANIC, ISISP, A-1/2, vol. I, f. 3: *Hotarire privitor la crearea Institutului de Istorie a Partidului* [*Decision regarding the creation of the Institute for the History of the Party*], f. 3–4. On the document, the names of Pauker, Luca, Georgescu, and Pătrășcanu are erased heavily with a blue pen: a consequence of the fight among the elite's factions,

The struggle over the Museum was not over, and a new character entered into the fray: Vasile Varga. A member of the Agitation and Propaganda Section under Roller, Varga wrote a report in which he accused Vaida's replacement, Constantin Agiu, of 'wrong and unjust opinions with regard to our Party's and our government's politics'.[91] Agiu was consequently replaced in September 1953 by Varga.[92]

There is no clear evidence to prove the proximity between Agiu and Cuşnir-Mihailovici, but many reports by the latter make evident the conflict existing between herself and Varga. In 1951, she accused him of being a danger to the Institute.[93] In 1952, she accused Varga of not having developed a proper sense of duty, and for not having contributed to the development of the Institute's assigned tasks.[94] Her efforts to put Varga in a bad light and to show in 1953 his responsibility for the slowed down work on a monograph on the beginning of the workers' movement did not lead to his elimination, but resulted in him being appointed as head of the Museum sector.[95] The last piece of information on the conflict between Cuşnir-Mihailovici and Varga is a negative report by this latter, signed also by other co-workers, on the attitude of Cuşnir-Mihailovici towards the employees. Varga accused her of weighting the work plans and giving favours to some employees at the expense of others.[96] It is not clear if her dismissal as

which left traces in the archive. Also the name "A. G. Vaida" is erased. A new copy of this document was reprinted in 1954, and the four names are absent.

[91] Simina Bădică, 'The Revolutionary Museum', 106.

[92] ANIC, ISISP, A-2/1, vol. III, ff. 24–30, *Schema personalului existent a Institutului de Istorie a Partidului de pe langa CC al PMR şi unitaţile sale anexe (Muzee, Expoziţii, etc.,) cuprinzand intreg activul existent atât politic cât şi tehnic şi administrativ împartit pe secţii şi sectoare* [*Scheme of the personnel existing at the Party History Institute and his auxiliary unities (Museums, exhibitions, etc.,) including the entire political, technical and administrative existing activities divided by sections and sectors*], f. 25. Agiu was formally accused in 1955 for having violated Party discipline, and Varga's report constituted a part of this accusation. Dan Cătănuş, 'Disciplina de Partid şi fostii ilegalisti. Cazul Constantin Agiu, 1955', Arhivele Totalitarismului, 3–4 (2010), 197–219.

[93] ANIC, ISISP, A-6/1, f. 225–231: *Raport de activitate a Redacţiei Institutului de Istorie a Partidului pe anul 1951, 20-II-1952* [*Report on the activities of the Party History Institute in 1951].*

[94] ANIC, ISISP, A-6/1, ff. 230–231: 'The lack of care and sufficient preparation in the fulfilment of his tasks, the inappropriate methods of work, the insufficient assistance to the cadres of the collective, are also a consequence of the fact that comrade Varga did not present himself [at work] and did not develop a sense of duty as required by the given orders, as the workplace in which he has been put requires him to do'.

[95] ANIC, ISISP, A-2/1, vol. II, f. 25: *Schema personalului existent, 17-IX-1953* [*Scheme of the current personnel*].

[96] Stoica, 46.

director of the Institute and appointment as vice-director was caused by this tension between her and Roller's network.

What remains clear is that formal direction of the Institute was passed on to Constantin Pîrvulescu, a powerful communist very close to Gheorghiu-Dej,[97] and the main artisan of the fake charges of "rightist deviationism", "cosmopolitism", and "anti-Party activities" levelled against the former high-ranking Party members Ana Pauker, Vasile Luca and Teohari Georgescu. The symbolic dimension of this change is notable, since from this instance the Institute was taken over by the autochthonous network. However, while formally only vice-director, Cușnir-Mihailovici's role at the Institute still remained fundamental for yet another year. Between 1954 and 1955 she still signed herself as "director". She was officially vice-director for scientific work, but in practical terms she still directed the Institute,[98] still having real weight in promoting structural reforms and the institutionalization of new sectors.[99] At the same time, the first Scientific Council of the Institute was formed, on September 1st, 1953, incorporating Roller and 13 more top-level propagandists.[100]

In 1955, there were many changes in the cultural sphere. New policies were finalized, promoting different politics than those dictated from Moscow, and consequently the professionalization of Party and state institutions. The Section for Science and Culture (*Secția pentru Știință și Cultură*) was founded under the leadership of Leonte Răutu. The Academy was reorganized, and new members were included.[101] With this general reorientation of the regime's cultural politics, in 1955 Mihail Roller was

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[97] Constantin Pîrvulescu was one of the founders of the Romanian Communist Party, an ethnic Romanian with a controversial and mysterious biography. After 1944, he became very close to Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej. When he was appointed director of the Institute, he had already been a member of the CC since 1945, president of the National Assembly since January 1953, and president of the Party Control Commission. Florica Dobre (ed.), *Membri CC al PCR 1945–1989. Dicționar* (Bucharest: Editura Enciclopedică, 2004), 461–462.

[98] ANIC, CC al PCR, Secția Propagandă și Agitație, 66/1953, f. 1: *Hotărîre n. 414/1953* [*Decision n. 414/1953*]. Niculescu Petre as vice-director for archival problems, and Petre Grosu as director of the Museum Lenin-Stalin.

[99] ANIC, ISISP, A-2/1, ff. 54–55: *Observații cu privire la regulamentul și schema de organizare a Institutului de Istorie a Partidului de pe lânga CC al PMR, 13-I-1954* [*Observations regarding the scheme and organization of the Party History Institute*].

[100] Ibidem. Emil Bodnăraș, Miron Balea, Leonte Răutu, Grigore Cotovschi, Sorin Toma, Paul Niculescu-Mizil, Constanța Crăciun, Leonte Tismăneanu, Nicolae Goldberger, Clara Cușnir-Mihailovici, Petre Lupu, Petre Grosu, and Gheorghe Vasilichi.

[101] Stoica, 37.

downgraded from vice-president of the Academy to vice-director of the Institute, while Cuşnir-Mihailovici was downgraded to vice-director of the Museum. The Institute and the Museum became parallel in their tasks and were subject to a common plan. After that, Cuşnir-Mihailovici was free to change the narrative offered by the Museum, giving more relevance to the history of the autochthonous communists. More importance was given to, in her own words, 'the old veterans that took part in the important events of the history of the workers' movement'.[102] In conclusion, Roller's virtual monopoly regarding Party history effectively ended.

Despite the ideological framing of the accusations, the actual reason for the conflict between Cuşnir-Mihailovici and Roller was whether the Museum should be attached to the Institute or the Academy. The object of conflict was the Museum, but the aim of the struggle was different for the two opponents: the aim for Roller was to preserve his monopoly on historiography, for Cuşnir-Mihailovici it was to write it anew. In fact, the Party History Institute had as its main aim to write the history of the Party, which was only marginal in Roller's narrative on Romania. Vaida and Varga continued to foster Roller's hegemony in the history museum and its main narrative, reflecting Roller's synthesis (he is reported to have claimed that 'the museum is my estate'),[103] until Clara Cuşnir-Mihailovici was forced to leave the General Direction of the Institute and instead use the Museum as the base for a new historical narrative, leaving the direction of the Institute to Roller.

The struggle for resources was disguised as a struggle about the implementation of Party politics. Both Cuşnir-Mihailovici and Roller spoke Bolshevik: they presented themselves as executioners of Party orders. But, as shown above, they were both moved by their need to control the Party history field, and therefore heteronomy (success) was their key value, while ideology was the way in which they chose to frame their conflict.

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[102] ANIC, ISISP, A-2/1, Vol. VI, *Letter from Clara Cuşnir-Mihailovici, director of the Museum, 7.XII.1956*, f. 3.
[103] Bădică, 'The Revolutionary Museum', 105.

4.5 Professionalization as a feature of the
new Party strategy, 1955–1956

The need to control history-writing was not easily combined with increased professionalization, but at the same time the Party decidedly turned in this direction after 1955. This sub-chapter analyses the attempts at professionalization of the Institute and the undertow generated by various networks of activists as a consequence. Already in 1954, the Agitation and Propaganda Section had pointed out the urgent need to enrol cadres with adequate scientific preparation.[104] That year, in fact, the "Zhdanov" school was absorbed into the "Ştefan Gheorghiu" school in order to simplify the bureaucratic structure of Party education. The two establishments had clashed over aims and methods, and half of the personnel had to be relocated.[105] But the urgent need for professionals meant the Party could not wait for candidates to pass all the examinations required for the preparation of qualified staff. Later that year, the Agitprop proposed the reduction of the required workload of the doctoral candidates from two years to one year, and later suggested that the candidates be admitted to present their dissertations without completing their exams. Among the 27 candidates for whom the Agitprop interceded in this manner was Barbu Zaharescu, who was appointed new assistant director of the Institute in 1954.[106]

The recent merging of the "Zhdanov" School into the "Ştefan Gheorghiu" School caused some disturbance within the Party. The veterans felt their position threatened. With the implementation of the new Party education curricula, they risked being surpassed by the young activists educated in the Party schools. The veterans' sudden need for formal quali-

[104] Petre Opriş, 'Tentativă de fraudă intelectuală la nivelul nomenclaturii dejiste. Doctori în ştiinţe, cu orice preţ!', *Dosarele Istoriei* IX (12/2004), 11–15.
[105] Gheorghiu, *Intelectuali în cîmpul puterii*, 93.
[106] A member of the Party since 1923, he held several leading positions in Party organizations after the war: the Institute of Political and Administrative Studies in 1947, the Party's publishing House (*Editura PMR*) and the theoretic and political organ of the Party *Lupta de Clasă* from 1950 to 1954. He was appointed professor at the faculty of economics at Bucharest University, teaching political economy, despite the fact that he did not possess any academic degree. Zaharescu published Marxist economic theory compendia like *Despre Capitalul lui Karl Marx* (*About the Capital of Karl Marx*, 1948), and was the author of the unique synthesis of political economy for intermediate education (*Synthesis unic de economie politică pentru învăţămîntul mediu*, 1948), and of a *Curs elementar de economie politică* (*Basic course of political economy*, 1949). His interest in RCP history is indicated by his 1945 monograph about Pavel Tcacenco, a Russian activist in the Romanian Communist Party in the 1920s.

fications explains why a close network of veterans actively decided to dilute and simplify the educational process of Party doctoral studies. The fact that veteran Barbu Zaharescu was teaching at the university was appreciated by those in the Party leadership who wanted to promote the Institute as a scholarly institution,[107] and Zaharescu's formal doctoral degree probably helped him to obtain his position at the Institute, where he in turn could favour the network of old veterans.

In 1955, Gheorghiu-Dej personally stopped the attempt to dilute the educational requirements. Instead, a proper professionalization process was now fully endorsed by the Party.[108] Despite this mishap, Zaharescu was confirmed as assistant director of the Institute, and became for a short while the main executioner of the Party strategy for the co-option of the intellectuals into Party-governed organizations, implementing the profes- sionalization process within the Institute.[109]

The international political relaxation subsequent to the death of Stalin had effects also on the Romanian regime and its cultural system. According to Bogdan C. Iacob, 1955 was the year when two different dichotomies became observable in the actions of the Party: professionalization was en- dorsed by the Party while at the same time different power networks sought to guarantee their representation in the various institutions. Furthermore, a dichotomy appeared between the persistence of the ideological purity of Stalinism and the anti-Stalinist (called by Iacob "anti-dogmatic"), control- ling (called by Iacob "modernising") tendencies within the Party.[110]

At the same time, Gheorghiu-Dej declared that the 'wind of liberal change'[111] blowing among the intellectuals was not intended as a return to the past; rather, that the Party should not have considered the intellectuals as reactionaries. He would not allow the international relaxation to influen-

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[107] Probably, Zaharescu was awarded by C. Pârvulescu and L. Răutu, P. Niculescu-Mizil, who were in charge of the reorganization of the Institute. Source: T. Georgescu, *Tot un fel de istorie*, 174.

[108] Opriş, 'Tentativă de fraudă intelectuală', cit.

[109] The "false professionalization" of Barbu Zaharescu continued in 1955, when he became corresponding member of the Academy with the help of Leonte Răutu. See P. Opriş, 'Cine l-a făcut academician pe Nicolae Ceauşescu?', *Jurnalul National*, 8 Septem- ber 2009, available on http://jurnalul.ro/scinteia/special/cine-l-a-facut-academ ician-pe-nicolae-ceausescu-520163.html Retrieved on October 2nd, 2015.

[110] Iacob, 'Co-option and Control', 199. Bogdan refers to "groups" (199) to indicate what I refer to as networks. See Chapter 7, section 7.2.

[111] ANIC, CC al PCR, Cancelarie, 74/1955, *Plenara CC al PMR din 30 septembrie- 1octombrie 1955*, f. 32, quoted in Iacob, 'Co-option and Control', 199.

ce the country's internal life, but granted the re-admittance of intellectuals who had been purged during the period of high Stalinism. This was part of the regime's change of strategy from control and repression to control and co-option.[112] The main aim of the Party was to decrease the number of activists enrolled and to improve the quality of their education – fewer activists, and better skilled.[113]

The far-reaching re-admittance of intellectuals must have caused a certain discomfort among Party propagandists, who had been trained by Stalinist ideology to consider them reactionaries and class enemies – and who had spent at least the last seven years of their careers in this ideological certainty. The person who paid the highest price during this change of events was the main promoter of Stalinism in Romania, Mihai Roller, who was within a short time dismissed both as vice-president of the Academy, where he failed to be re-elected, and from the Propaganda Department, where he was succeeded by Pavel Țugui, a close ally of Gheorghiu-Dej, placed there in order to begin the nationalizing of culture.[114] In March 1955, Roller became instead the *de facto* director of the Institute,[115] under the formal direction of Constantin Pârvulescu.[116]

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[112] Verdery identified three modes of control of the Socialist states: 'remunerative (relying on material incentives), coercive (relying on force), and normative (relying on moral imperatives)'; Verdery, *National Ideology Under Socialism*, 83–84. The process here described, in her terms, would be the passage from a coercive to a remunerative mode. I prefer, for clarity, to underline the persistence of the control element, which is part of the hierarchical and managerial principles of bureaucratic organizations; see Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, cit.

[113] Cristian Vasile, *Literatură și artele în România comunistă, 1948–1953* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2010), 54–58. See also Iacob, *Stalinism, Historians, and the* Nation, 132.

[114] See Pavel Țugui, *Istoria și limba română în vremea lui Gheorghiu-Dej. Memoriile unui fost șef de Secție a CC al PMR* (Bucharest: Ion Cristoiu, 1999).

[115] In 1955, the Department was split in two: the Section of Agitation and Propaganda, and the Section for Science and Culture. At that time, the latter Section was ruled by Mihai Roller, formally the vice-director. In March 1955 Roller lost his position in the Section for Science and Culture. Stoica, 44.

[116] Pleșa, *Mihail Roller*, 174.

Many networks had different interests in confronting Roller.[117] The Party historians, as has been shown previously in the case of Clara Cuşnir-Mihailovici, competed with him regarding the Party's past in an attempt to establish a new master narrative that would surpass Roller's synthesis. These conflicts were presented as complaints about Roller's lack of professionalism. The Party Control Commission, on the other hand, complained about the unsatisfactory level of production at the Institute, while the top-level historians, who could not stomach Roller's incompetence in the field of national history, on a few occasions expressed to the leadership[118] their dissatisfaction with Roller. They reported to the leadership the bad reputation that Roller had among their colleagues recently rehabilitated from the purges.

It seems that the accumulated complaints about Roller from the different groups forced the Party leadership to dismiss him, after those involved had clarified that their manifest opposition to Roller did not mean opposition to the regime.[119] On the other hand, the regime's decision to place Roller at the Institute could have been made specifically with the intention to control the veterans and keep them within the range of Stalinist dogmatism, while at the same time the Party-promoted professionalization allowed the first qualified historian to enter the Institute – Titu Georgescu, who was immediately entrusted with the reorganization of the Institute.[120]

[117] According to C. B. Iacob, the enemies of Roller were the Party historians, the apparatus members, the historians of the Academy, and the political leadership. Those four groups had different interests when opposing Roller, and also used different lines of argument. Iacob presents the common interests of different groups in Roller's downfall: he was challenged by the Party historians and the establishment who considered his work unsuccessful; by the historians who considered him incompetent and over-ideological; and by the leadership, since he was at the centre of the power struggles between Gheorghiu-Dej and the veterans. Roller was demoted, according to Iacob, because he was detrimental to the Party plan of co-opting the intellectuals, and since his management methods had been criticized by the Propaganda Department. Iacob, *Stalinism, Historians, and the Nation*, 128–129.
[118] For example, the president of the Academy Traian Săvulescu intimated a firm 'it's him or me!' directly to Gheorghiu -Dej, and the latter complained to Leonte Răutu about Roller. In Gheorghe Zane, *Memorii 1939–1974* (Bucharest: Expert, 1997), 176 and 272, quoted in S. Stoica, 43–44; also in Constantiniu, *De la Răutu şi Roller*, 191.
[119] For an extensive list of the complaints of Party members and historians regarding the work of Mihail Roller, see S. Stoica, 41–44.
[120] In 1955, Titu Georgescu, recently graduated from the Faculty of History of the University of Bucharest, was enrolled as scientific secretary while Zaharescu was still vice-director. Georgescu's role was given to him by the director Constantin Pîrvulescu, and two other top-level members of the Central Committee and Agitprop, Leonte Răutu

But the Party plan was applied while trying to accommodate the existing personnel with the new rules. Only two researchers at the Institute had previous experience of specialised historical studies; adequate training was otherwise generally absent. Some of the recently employed (by Georgescu characterised as 'young'), who probably put pressure on the Institute's leadership to continue the professionalization, were enrolled as students at the Faculty of History 'without frequency'.[121] This meant that they could pass the exams without being obliged to follow the university lessons, and could therefore keep up with their daily work. According to Georgescu, some of the researchers felt threatened by the newly welcomed younger researchers' arrival at the Institute, 'and blocked those with higher education'[122] in order to favour the old propagandists, allowing them enough time to obtain a degree in history and in this manner conform to the required professional standard. For this reason, many propagandists of the Institute had to start attending courses at the Faculty of History in order to keep their positions at the Institute.[123]

The Scientific Council of the Institute was reformed into a gigantic assembly of 39 members.[124] In my interpretation, the ultimate aim of the

and Paul Niculescu-Mizil. Zaharescu, who had recommended him, planned to give him 'scientific responsibility for the three research sectors', evidently to further the process of professionalization required by the Party. However, we have no information as to the reason why Georgescu was selected among the graduates. Georgescu, *Tot un fel de istorie*, 175–178. Information on Georgescu's political position is also sparse, apart from some statements in his memoir, which appears to be a reconstruction of fragmented memories on cumulative layers dealing primarily with his responsibility for the meta-narrative canon's turn in the Ceausescu regime's history-writing milieu. On source criticism in general and specifically on memoirs and their limitations, see the chapter dedicated to source criticism.

[121] Georgescu, *Tot un fel de istorie*, 178.

[122] Ibidem.

[123] Those were David Viorica, Vasile Varga, Nicolae Petrovici, Augustin Tedoreanu, Georgeta Breazu, Elena Mihalache, Livia Covaci, Elena Ciurea, Maria Lungeanu, Simion Cutişteanu, Ion Toncă, Saşa Muşat, Livia Vasilciuc for the scientific section, and Vasile Anoiței for the archival section. ANIC, ISISP, A-2/1, vol. V, ff. 37–39: *Tabel nominal, 23-II-1955* [*Names table*].

[124] The new members of the council were Gheorghe Apostol, Emil Bodnăraş, Petre Borilă, Constantin Pîrvulescu, Leonte Răutu, Leontin Sălăjan, Stefan Voitec, Constantin Agiu, Zina Brîncu, Silviu Brucan, Victor Cherestesiu, Iosif Chişinevschi, Ecaterian Chivu, Miron Constantinescu, Ştefan Cruceru, Titu Georgescu, Petre Gheorghe, Ion Gheorghiu, Petre Grosu, Vasile Hurmuz, Teodor Iordachescu, Atanase Joja, Grigore Kotovschi, Clara Cuşnir-Mihailovici, Matei Gheorghe, Paul Niculescu-Mizil, Petre Niculescu, Ion Pas, Nicolae Petrovici, Grigore Preoteasa, Victor Raţă, Mihail Roller, Mihail Roşianu, Tudor Rudenko, Solomon Ştirbu, Leonte Tismăneanu, Pavel Ţugui, Ion

reformed council was to guarantee proper Party control over the activities at the Institute, and to monitor the interaction between the old uneducated propagandists, the young ideologically-educated cadres, and the professional historians.

Roller, in his new position, controlled the Institute. Consequently, the dismissal and employment of new personnel was his responsibility, something he could turn to his own advantage – namely, to defend his own crumbling position. In 1955 he recruited 29 new researchers to the Institute with the intention of replacing the old propagandists.[125] The quality of these new researchers can be seen in their education records: 12 of them had graduated in history at the Faculty of History of Bucharest University,[126] three had graduated at the Party Graduate School,[127] and two were undergraduate students.[128] They were all Party members or Communist Youth Union members,[129] and had either a position in the Section for Propaganda or at the Party Committee at the University of Bucharest.

Judging by Roller's actions, graduate students were desirable as long as they did not question his theses,[130] or were by definition undesirable if they

Vinţe, Stefan Voicu. ANIC, ISISP, A-6/1, f. 127, *Membri Consiliului Ştiinţific al Institutului de Istorie a Partidului de pe lîngă CC al PMR (Hotărîrea Biroului Politic al CC al PMR nr. 481 din 2 iulie 1955)* [*Members of the Scientific Council of the Party History Institute (Decision of the Political Bureau nr. 481, 2nd July 1955)*], f. 127–128.

[125] In ANIC, ISISP, A-2/1, Vol. IX, f. 13, *Lista angajarilor în ultimii doi ani la Secţia de Istorie a Institutului* [*List of the employees enrolled in the last two years by the History Section of the Institute*]. The enrolment of these new colleagues was the result of polycentric movements: first, the Party plans, supporting "scientific history-writing" according to its own fashion; second, the Institute's need to compete with other institutions over resources and expand its range of actions; and, third, the desire of Roller, fallen from a top-position, to have trustworthy collaborators to use as resources in order to defend his position and possibly strengthen it.

[126] The Institute's researchers graduated in history and enrolled in 1955: Avram Vasile, Iosif Colcer, Robert Deutsch, Petre Ignat, Ion Iacoş, Vasile Liveanu, Constantin Mocanu, Elena Maxudovici, Vasile Petrişor, Gheorghe Rădulescu, Nicolae Rauş, Alexandru Savu, Victoria Stefanescu, Vladimir Zaharescu. Others were aspirant: Gheorghe Adorian, Titu Georgescu, Gavril Marcuson, Aurel Roman, Gheorghe Ţuţui. In ANIC, ISISP, A-2/1, Vol. IX, f. 13, *Lista angajarilor în ultimii doi ani la Secţia de Istorie a Institutului*, f. 13.

[127] Researchers graduated from the Party High School and enrolled in 1955: Suzana Homenco, Nicoale Munteanu, and Gheorghe Moţ. In ibidem.

[128] Prospective students enrolled by the Institute in 1955: Nathan Lupu and Eugenia Mosolova. In Ibidem.

[129] ANIC, ISISP, A-2/1, Vol. IX, f. 8, *Tabel cu personalul ştiinţific al Institutului* [*Table with the scientific personnel of the Institute*], ff. 8–12.

[130] Roller actively removed from the Institute all the researchers that, graduates or not, expressed discontent with his leadership. One example is Petre Bunta, a Romanian of Transylvanian origin, who at that time was head of the International Sector of the Insti-

had the bad luck to be too close to his enemies. For example, among the first actions that he took as vice-director was the removal of the head of the history section, Viorica David, former protégé of Clara Cuşnir-Mihailovici,[131] who was on his way to graduate in history. In David's place, Roller specifically requested Gheorghe Matei, a former communist journalist and MP for the Ploughmen's Front. Matei had graduated in history in 1947 and had previously been associate professor at the Political Sciences Institute and the Faculty of History of the University of Bucharest.[132]

To strengthen his relationship with historians and propagandists, Roller proposed to confer doctoral titles on Gheorghe Matei, Valter Roman, director of Editura Politică, and Solomon Ştirbu, head of the Department of History of the Party at the Zhdanov Party Graduate School, by applying the norm generally used for conferring the *doctor honoris causa* title.[133] However, this attempt eventually failed,[134] which clearly indicates Roller's decreasing influence. But Roller frequently succeeded in crushing those who opposed his historiography.[135] Titu Georgescu, and Roller were involved in a conflict regarding different ways to conduct scholarly research and the

tute. In his dissertation, Bunta quoted the works of Pătrăşcanu, which were forbidden; this was considered by Roller as an expression of nationalism. Seeing the quote as a direct provocation, Roller removed him from the Institute, and Bunta was relocated to a factory in Cluj. Another case was the removal of Traian Udrea, enrolled in the "before 1915" Party History Institute section, but also a researcher at the N. Iorga Institute between 1949 and 1955, actually then the main scientific researcher there. He was simply removed by the will of Roller, without any additional explanation. Georgescu, *Tot un fel de istorie*, 193–194.

[131] A positive assessment of him by Clara Cuşnir-Mihailovici is contained in ANIC, ISISP, A-6/1, f. 225: *Raport de activitate a Redacţiei Institutului de Istorie a Partidului pe anul 1952, 20-II-1952* [*Report on the activities of the Party History Institute in 1951*], f. 270.

[132] Roller wrote his name, "Gheorghe", with a red pencil, eliminating the name of Viorica, from the organizational scheme of the Institute; ANIC, ISISP, A-2/1, vol. V, f. 65, *Schema de organizare a Institutului de Istorie a Partidului* [*Organizational scheme of the Party History Institute*], f. 65.

[133] ANIC, ISISP, A-15/9 vol. II, *Propunerea cu privire la acordarea titlului ştiinţific unor cadre didactice* [*Proposal regarding the entitlement of scientific title to some among the didactical cadres*], f. 117–121.

[134] Ştefănescu, *Enciclopedia istoriografiei româneşti*, 213, "Matei, Gheorghe"; and ibid., 282, "Roller, Mihai".

[135] Roller wrote three negative reviews (two under pseudonyms, M. Neamtu and M. Stănoiu) of Gheorghe Haupt's *Din istoricul legăturilor revoluţionare româno-ruse (1850 – 1881)* [Bucharest: Editura Academiei, 1955] and sent them to the committee for the prestigious and valuable state prize, by which the book was selected for competition. The attempt to disqualify the book, which invalidated Roller's narrative, succeeded. ANIC, ISISP, A-13/2, ff. 60–120; D. Hurezeanu, A. Stan, 'Publicarea izvoarelor istoriei moderne', *Studii*, XV (6/1962), 1653–1671; 1669.

editing of Party documents. Georgescu was eventually sent back to work at Editura Enciclopedică in 1956. In this way, Roller lost a good professional, but replaced him with the loyal Nicolae Petrovici, who was also editor-in-chief of the Institute's journal.[136]

These attempts to consolidate Roller's position, by giving positions and titles to his allies, while removing those who opposed him, took place in 1956–1957, and were part of a more general professionalization process at the Institute that started in 1955, under Roller's control and Răutu's super-vision.[137] This process coincided with a reduction in the size of the Institute effected by the Political Bureau of the CC. By August 1957, the Institute had been deprived of 20 co-workers by a decision of the Political Bureau. According to the decision, another 13 would lose their positions.[138] These cuts were applied entirely to the Section for History, which lost 18 co-wor-kers.[139] Evidently, these cuts were the result of the reaction to de-Stalinization, which in theory required the substitution of those who were not trained and who therefore could not master the art of historical propaganda. But, in practice, as shown before, those dynamics on positions were ruled by networks' strategies. In fact, no substantial change is visible in the historio-graphical trend adopted immediately after those changes took place.

But there was more. Roller perhaps imagined, in 1957, that Răutu was still protecting him, and that he could take advantage of the situation to regain his influence. Leonte Răutu, who had supported Roller since 1948, now with Gheorghiu-Dej's approval demoted him to director of the Institute. The Political Bureau of the CC reduced the Party History Institute in size, seeking to professionalize its personnel, while leaving Roller under

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[136] ANIC, ISISP, A-2/1, vol. VIII, f. 2, *Tabel nominal de activul Institutului de Istorie a Partidului de pe lînga CC al PCR la data de 15.III.1958* [*Personnel table of the com-petition of the Party History Institute on the date 15 March 1958*], f. 2.

[137] Cuşnir-Mihailovici, close to Răutu, praised the new reorganization of the Institute: 'at the present moment there are 63 graduates, 18 candidates and newly-admitted students in the historical sciences'; ANIC, ISISP, A-5/9, *Sedinţa Consiliului Ştiinţific, 4 Ianuarie 1957* [*Meeting of the Steering Committee, 4 January 1957*], ff. 34. In another document (undated, mid-1956) Mihail Roller states that 'in the last months ten candidates and prospective graduates in the historical sciences and 17 graduated from the Faculty of History were enrolled' at the Institute; ANIC, ISISP, A-5/9, *Stenograma Sesiunei Consiliului Ştiinţific al Institutului de Istorie a Partidului de pe lîngă CC al PCR* [*Transcript of the Session of the Scientific Council of the Party History Institute*], ff. 126–127.

[138] ANIC, ISISP, A-2/1, Vol. VIII, *Catre Conducerea Institutului de Istorie a Partidului* [*To the Direction of the Party History Institute*], f. 24.

[139] ANIC, ISISP, A-2/1, Vol. VIII, *Schema numerică a Institutului de Istorie a Partidului* [*Numerical Scheme of the Party History Institute*], f. 32.

the direct control of the Propaganda Department with the responsibility for the activities of the Institute. Toppling Roller without a clear political reason would have meant admitting that changes were happening in consequence of the de-Stalinization process, and this was not the preferred version of events. Officially, the major changes in the Party were due to the "de-masking" of the "deviationists". A direct purge of Roller would have meant a loss of credibility for the leadership, since it had supported Roller's approach to history discipline since 1948.

4.6 The negative outcome of the professionalization: the veterans against the synthesis of Party History

With the Party control re-established and a partial professionalization fulfilled, the Institute could have worked undisturbed on writing the projected new syntheses on Romanian and Party history. However, archival sources indicate that, still in 1957, a number of the post-Bolsheviks did not like certain aspects of the new draft of "their" history, re-written by young propagandists educated in the Party school. Two groups were clearly dis-satisfied: the historians and the veterans. The historians were few in number but were needed by the Party in order to increase its legitimacy domestically and abroad. These historians were cautious in their public statements, conscious of their marginal position. The veterans, on the other hand, were numerous, and loud and clear in stating their dissent with the Stalinist version of the Party history. They wanted to reaffirm their importance in the history of the Party, and considered that the young propagandists threatened their cultural capital, and therefore their position.[140]

The research personnel had two major tasks to pursue within the Institute: to write the synthesis of the Party and of the workers' movement and, from the mid-1960s, to write the history of Romania. From 1951 the Institute published a number of volumes of edited documents on the Party and the workers' movement.[141] Under Roller's supervision, the Institute

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[140] According to Pierre Bourdieu, the cultural capital ultimately redounds to the owner's financial and societal advantage. See Pierre Bourdieu, *La Distinction: critique sociale du jugement* (Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1979), 10–12.

[141] Under Cuşnir-Mihailovici's supervision, during the period 1951–1953, the Institute published seven volumes of documents on the history of the workers' movement and the Romanian Communist Party, on Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej and the struggle of the

mainly aimed at giving credit to itself for work done on the behalf of other institutions[142] and at delegating its tasks to other Party organizations, which caused some complaints.[143] Intending to increase his cultural authority by patronizing research projects at the Institute, Roller tried to include as many researchers as possible in the work on the synthesis of Party history – with the consequence of producing a megalomaniac outline of the synthesis in 30 volumes, reduced to 12 after an intervention by Răutu.[144]

These preparatory drafts were read by local and regional Party sections, by propagandists, researchers, teachers, and old Party activists. All these

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railway workers in 1933. The Institute also translated texts of Lenin and Stalin concerning Romania, and edited works by Marx and Engels. For the general public, one volume of documents on Party history was published concerning the period 1917–1922, but a second volume on the history of the Party during the period 1923–1928 was published only 'for internal use'. ANIC, ISISP, A-6/1, f. 1: *Informatie*. See also ANIC, ISISP, A-6/1, f. 208: *Raport de Activitate din perioda aprilie-august 1953 a Institutului de Istorie a Partidului, 26 August 1953* [*Report on the activity of the Party History Institute in the period April-August 1953*].

[142] For example, accrediting at the Institute the doctoral dissertations defended by Romanian researchers at the Zhdanov School in the Soviet Union, or accrediting as already published some biographies that were yet unpublished but part of the work plans of the Institute. ANIC, ISISP, A-5/9, *Sedinţa largită a consiliului ştiinţific al Institutului de Istorie a Partidului, miercuri, 15 februarie 1956* [*Enlarged meeting of the steering committee of the Party History Institute, Wednesday, 15 February 1956*], f. 68–69.

[143] In one case, a meeting of the Propaganda Sector clarified that the work of the sector-heads was mainly organizational: Varga, Matei, Petrovici and Ţuţui, all close collaborators of Roller, requisitioned works from other institutes *by telephone*. ANIC, ISISP, A-5/9, *Sedinţe Consiliului Ştiinţific, 4 ianuarie 1957* [*Session of the Steering committee, 4 January 1957*], f. 44–45. The work of Damian Hurezeanu, a researcher at the Academy on the 1907 peasant rebellion, was patronized by the Institute in spite of complaints from the Academy, which actually paid his salary. ANIC, ISISP, A-5/9, *Sedinţa largită a consiliului ştiinţific al Institutului de Istorie a Partidului, miercuri, 15 februarie 1956*, f. 98.

[144] The first steps towards the synthesis have been the establishing of a draft (*ante-project*), published on the first number of the Annals of the Institute, followed by a scientific session. The brochures that resulted from this first draft, named *În ajutorul celor ce urmează cursurile de istorie a PMR* (*For the assistance of those who follow the course of history of the Romanian Workers Party*), were destined for the Party history study circles. In Răutu's words: 'The plan is overloaded from many points of view. […] I propose a reduction of this plan […]. […] our mass of readers has no need for 30 brochures. I agree with this number, but they cannot be acquired by the readers. I do not think that a member of the Party can read 30 brochures every year, nor the members of the Scientific Council'; ANIC, ISISP, A-5/9, *Stenograma Sesiunii Consiliului Ştiinţific al Institutul de Istorie a Partidului* [*Transcipt of the Session of the Scientific Committee of the Party History Institute*], f. 145. After Răutu's intervention, the Institute worked on the different chapters of the synthesis, organizing discussions and lectures. The brochures and the chapter outlines benefited from another manuscript version of the synthesis, drafted by the Institute, the Section for Propaganda, and Editura Politică. See ANIC, ISISP, A-5/15, *Sedinţa din 1 marţie 1957* [*meeting of 1st March, 1957*], ff. 1–2.

organizations were requested to give their comments and feedback on the drafts. As a Party document, the history of the RWP should have been consensual, since this would have contributed to legitimizing Roller's position and to increasing his cultural capital inside the Party propaganda hierarchies and in the scholarly milieu. Unfortunately for Roller, the only scholars who could effectively give valuable comments on those drafts, who were mainly enrolled at the History Institute of the Academy, boycotted the meetings at the Party History Institute on the synthesis of Party history, claiming that they had no interest in entering into Party matters: it was not their task nor their field of expertise.[145] What instead came back onto the desk of Roller were comments focused on empirical elements of the narratives. Those comments were so many and so different between them that the whole work of review was made impossible.

For example, many criticisms appeared from the veterans. Early in 1957, the director of the Institute, Constantin Pîrvulescu, expressed some discontent regarding the ante-project on Party history, claiming that the recollections of the old militants were not reflected in it. He expressed his reservations regarding the young propagandists who had written the ante-project, since they had no experience of the Party struggles, and no political education apart from that received at the Party school. For Pîrvulescu this was not comparable to the experience of membership before 1944, and therefore they could not present the Party history properly.[146]

Two months later, the veterans discussing the new draft of the synthesis largely agreed that the brochures presented an 'anonymous' history of the Party, full of declarative statements but lacking in actual descriptive examples: names of the heroes of the Party, with their martyrdom recognized, were missing. Instead, they claimed, the narrative presented a history of the defeat of the workers' movement in Romania.[147] As the discussion continued, the participants increasingly insisted that their his-

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[145] According to Leonte Răutu, this boycott was 'probably because of the not completely normal relationships that exist between the Party History Institute and the History Institute of the Academia'; in ANIC, ISISP, A-5/15, *Sedința din 1 martie 1957* [*meeting of 1st March, 1957*], f. 280. The Institute and of the Academy were in fact also collaborating on the treatise on Romanian history after 1956, with Roller as the person responsible for the volume on contemporary history. See Stoica, 169–170.

[146] ANIC, ISISP, A-5/9, *Sedințe Consiliului Științific, 4 ianuarie 1957* [*Session of the Steering committee, 4 January 1957],* f. 52.

[147] ANIC, ISISP, A-5/15, *Sedința din 1 martie 1957* [*Meeting of 1st March, 1957*], f. 23–23, 46, 88, 166.

tory was misrepresented, as were Romania's interwar politicians and parties. But all the requests of the veterans for a more coherent narrative were crushed by Leonte Răutu.

The Party leadership was searching for a suitable narrative that would merge the old Stalinist ideology with the contemporary situation of ideological uncertainty since the political equilibrium was changing. In this context, the writing of Party history had to take into consideration the political necessities of the Party. As Răutu put it, 'this is not a romance, it is not a story, it is a Party document',[148] that 'will provide the correct scientific interpretation of the entire struggle of the Party'.[149] According to him, the mentioning of names of previous militants in the synthesis should be decided by the leadership of the Party, while the Propaganda Section could only make suggestions. The main problem when admitting the veterans into the Party's historical narrative was the potential effect their actions would have on the readers, since among them 'there were men who betrayed openly […] [and] men who have not betrayed, but behaved in a way that makes them unlikely to become popularised'.[150]

In Răutu's vision, since history was constructed taking in consideration the needs of a constantly changing present, every crystallization of Party narratives around characters of the past, or those still alive, would result in a need for complete revision once those persons had lost the support of the regime. This Party strategy had the disadvantage of obliterating all protagonists in the past, but offered the practical advantage of perfect adaptation to any kind of historiographical change in the political landscape. Ultimately, Răutu's vision signalled that historical knowledge was still an expression of power.[151] Archival evidence shows that the open criticism from the veterans ceased in mid-1958: in the next pages I will show what produced this change.

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[148] Ibid., f. 289: 'Aceasta nu e un roman, nu este o povestioară, este un document de partid'.
[149] Ibidem.
[150] Ibid., ff. 284.
[151] Ultimately, the narratives there discussed were published in concise form as short lectures, explicitly addressed to the activists and historians who were supposed to produce the Party history: Institutul de istorie a Partidului de pe lînga CC al PMR, *Lecții în ajutorul celor care studiază istoria PMR* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1960).

4.7 Forbidden memories – and their instrumental use

It is possible to frame the removal of Roller and 19 other researchers from the Institute as part of the anti-Semitic purges that from 1958 were staged in the cultural sphere under the direction of Leonte Răutu.[152] This process could be considered as associated with another one happening in the second half of the 1950s: the leadership's gradual removal of persons whose presence was dangerous.[153] New archival evidence seems to support such a conclusion, at least in the case of Mihail Roller.

In May 1958, Ofelia Manole, representative of the Propaganda Section, transmitted to Leonte Răutu a very critical report on the state of the Institute, 'conform[ing] to the indications of comrade Niculescu'.[154] In the report, Petre Niculescu, director of the Archive of the Party History Institute, indicated some points of criticism against the Institute's work on history: the 'facts-based handling of the events'[155] and the 'unscientific handling of the sources'.[156] The work on the synthesis of Party history had also frequently failed to observe the given deadlines. Niculescu criticized the staff composition at the Institute for not fulfilling the requirement of 'social composition and Party spirit, but also from the point of view of scientific training and ability'.[157] Niculescu attacked Roller directly on this point: 'the responsibility for this is carried mainly by comrade Roller, who has manifested a shallowness in the cadre politics'.[158]

Niculescu's report demanded a higher level of competence in the scientific collective of the Institute, an enlargement of the Institute's archive,[159] the appointment of a separate director for the Party History Mu-

[152] Tismăneanu, Vasile, *Perfectul acrobat,* 23, 51, 103; Bottoni, *Transilvania Rossa*, 273.

[153] Pleşa, 176; Iacob, *Stalin, the Historians*, 113–156; Stoica, 82–88.

[154] ANIC, CC al PCR – Secţia Propaganda şi Agitaţie, 1/1958, *Letter from Ofelia Manole to Leonte Răutu*, f. 267.

[155] "Fact-based handling": in the Party's ideological language ("wooden language"), the accusation of "factologism" was a critique in vogue during Stalinist times against pieces of history-writing that did not fit with the Party's interpretation. ANIC, CC al PCR – Secţia Propaganda şi Agitaţie, 1/1958, *Informaţie cu privire la activitatea Institutului de Istorie a Partidului de pe lîngă CC al PMR* [*Information regarding the activity of the Party History Institute*], f. 268.

[156] Ibidem.

[157] ANIC, CC al PCR – Secţia Propaganda şi Agitaţie, 1/1958, f. 271.

[158] Ibidem.

[159] Ibid., f. 271. Niculescu asked for the suspension of E. Ghenad, accused of 'anti-Party and fractionist demonstrations', and of E. Gaisinski, 'who has defended Ghenad', and the relocation of Mihai Francisc, 'who has proved his insufficient political orientation and lack of combativeness', at the State Archive; ibidem.

seum and the Lenin-Stalin Museum and, as the most important point, the report suggested that the entire leadership of the Institute should be removed.[160] At the same time, Niculescu asked to remain as director of the Institute's archive, with the assistance of a vice-director, while the rest of the archive staff should be replaced.[161] The report indicated desired changes to be made at the Institute, but it did not specify who should replace the fired cadres. It is evident that what happened a few months later, with Roller's dismissal, was the political execution of a plan decided well beforehand. He no longer had the backing of the Party leadership, and Niculescu, in my interpretation, was probably instructed to prepare a critical report on Roller's leadership of the Institute. The validity of this interpretation is supported by the fact that Niculescu's "proposals" remained for a while in Leonte Răutu's desk drawer, but nothing happened. Roller remained at the Institute for a few more months.

Mihai Roller's definitive fall was presented as a consequence of his unsatisfactory performance at the Institute. There is a connection with a specific incident. Since the sources available for the synthesis on Party history were rather sparse, he convoked some Party veterans and recorded their memories on tape.[162] The suggestion to collect the memories of the old veterans was made for the first time by Roller's assistant Petrovici during an Institute steering committee meeting in April 1958.[163] Roller basically

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[160] Ibid., f. 272: 'at the direction of the Party History Institute shall be made the following improvement', wrote Niculescu, but only small pencil dots, probably added by a reader of this text at the Propaganda Section – a common practice – followed.
[161] Ibid., f. 271.
[162] Evidence of this activity is in ANIC, ISISP, A-5/16, f. 1, *Stenogramele ședințele de dezbateri a anteproiectului synthesisului de Istorie a PMR de către vechi activisti, propagandisti și cursanți, organizate in Bucuresti, Iași, Oradea și Timișoara* [*Transcipt of records of the meetings of discussion of the draft of the synthesis of history of the RWP by old activists, propagandists and students, organized in Bucharest, Iași, Oradea and Timișoara*], f.1–222. This activity began as early as 1956: the referats contained in this folder were discussed at the beginning of 1957. Titu Georgescu, a victim of Roller, remembers that 'since 1957, the Institute began a wide action of preparing the anniversaries, in 1958, of the 25th anniversary of the railway workers' and oil workers' struggle in 1933'; T. Georgescu, *Tot un fel de istorie*, 218.
[163] 'Petrovici stated: 'I have received an anonymous letter from a group of participants in the general strike. They propose that we collect memories also regarding the events of the time'. Roller replied: 'the problem with memories, in order to become documents, is of great interest for our archive. Someone from the memory sector should take care of it, someone from the archive and the scientific secretary'. ANIC, ISISP, A-5/10, *Stenogramea ședinței de conducere din 14 april 1958* [*Transcipt of the steering committee meeting on April 14th, 1958*], f. 16.

allowed the veterans to freely recount their memories about the 1933 strike, an event that happened 25 years before, and which was a subject for which Roller needed sources in order to prepare a volume of memories for the strike's anniversary.[164]

He arranged for Suzana Homenco and Vasile Varga, among others, to record these memories.[165] A great number of veterans showed up at the Institute at separate sessions to have their recollections of the 1933 strike duly recorded. Giving voice to the voiceless was an error, as Roller soon discovered. The veterans were in fact 'obsessed by a sense of frustration, generated by the distribution of functions among the members of the nomenclature. […] the Party […] did not reward them according to their expectations'.[166] The veterans expressed dissatisfaction with their present situation, criticizing the personality cult surrounding Gheorghiu-Dej, and, in the words of Donces, the 'unbreathable air'[167] that the Party environment suffered because of it.

Since the Institute has given to the veterans the possibility to express critiques against the leadership, the Institute was identified by Gheorghiu-Dej as the 'centre for the rallying of those hostile, in one way or another, and for different reasons, to Dej'.[168] Gheorghiu-Dej reacted vehemently, instructing the Ministry of the Interior to exclude all the hostile veterans from the Party, and ordered Răutu to get rid of Roller, who was attacked publicly by the propaganda secretary Paul Niculescu-Mizil at the Plenum of the Communist Party[169] for spreading 'bourgeois ideology'. This was a stan-

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[164] Georgescu, *Tot un fel de Istorie*, 218.
[165] Ibidem.
[166] Constantiniu, 188.
[167] Pleşa, 175.
[168] Georgescu, *Tot un fel de istorie*, 219.
[169] 'Comrade Roller goes directly to the door [meaning: Roller has to leave the Institute]. There [at the Institute] the possibility has been given to create the legal forum for Doncea, Şandru and others to voice their opinions. It is not the first time that Doncea has tried to deform the reality regarding the fights of Griviţa. It is known that for many years, on several occasions, Doncea has supported this thesis: "It was not the Party, it was all me!"'. […] At the History Institute this was treated as if it were a bourgeois institute, each and everybody came and spread venom, ambitions. […] I do serious self-criticism because I have not analysed these deeply unjust methods that have brought about the modification of history. I did not create the Party History Institute so that each and everyone who wants to enter history should come and record his opinions.'; Paul Niculescu-Mizil, quoted in Constantiniu, 190.

dard method used since the Twentieth Congress of the Soviet Union's Communist Party to expel and isolate many intellectuals.[170]

After the plenary session Paul Niculescu-Mizil, Secretary of the Propaganda Section, went straight to the Institute and presented the report on the Institute prepared by the Party leadership. The report asked for the replacement of the Institute's leadership, retaining only Niculescu as director of the archive.[171] As we have seen previously, Niculescu was asked already before these events to indicate the main deficiencies in the Institute and suggest a new leadership. Thus, the evidence indicates that the implication of the Institute in the veterans' "conspiracy" was tenuous at best: this incident merely effectuated decisions already made. There is in fact no evidence linking Roller to the veterans apart from this single episode. Gheorghiu-Dej no doubt saw a direct connection between Roller and the disloyal veterans, and reacted as if this was a concerted attack on him from the tribune of the Institute.

Gheorghiu-Dej learned an important lesson from the veterans' incident, namely to reward the veterans by giving them place in the Party's history, giving them symbolical recognition in exchange for their loyalty. The incident had shown that the veterans could constitute more than a network of persons pursuing personal interests: they could easily present themselves as a group with common requests. Given the potential risk for the leadership, Gheorghiu-Dej punished those responsible for the incident, but did not start any purge among the veterans, considering instead the possibility of exploiting their symbolic capital.

Roller, instead, committed a serious misjudgement when allowing the veterans to come forward with their testimonies. Whether he wanted merely to create an oral history archive, or to expand his network of allies, the result was still negative. His downfall had actually been decided months

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[170] See, for example, ANIC, CC al PCR – Secția Propaganda și Agitație, 1/1958, *Informație privind unele măsuri luate în instituțiile de presă și radio pentru combaterea ideologiei burgheze* [*Information on some measures taken in press and radio institutions to fight bourgeois ideology*], ff. 264–266.

[171] Pleșa, 175. The accusations were resumed in a November 1958 report on the activities of the Institute, written by Paul Niculescu-Mizil: 'by the organization of meetings of the participants of the events of February 1933 to collect their memories, it has provided anti-Party elements with a forum to express their opinions, damaging for the Party. The comrades in the leadership of the Party and some of the cadre that have worked in the collection of the memories have given proof of a serious lack of combativeness, of appeasement'; ANIC, ISISP, A-6/1, *Referat cu privire la activitatea Institutului de Istorie a Partidului de pe lîngă CC al PCR* (*Report on the Activity of the Party History Institute*), f. 104.

before, but not yet enacted. After the "fall of the veterans", the definitive downfall of Roller could be staged based on more solid grounds than just a single critical report written by the director of the Institute archive.[172] As an ultimate consequence for the Institute, the incident led to the expulsion of 19 researchers accused of being appeasing' or 'dishonest petit-bourgeois'.[173] A few days later, when his official dismissal as director of the Institute was on its way, Roller committed suicide.

From this episode, it is evident that the leadership of the RCP was good at speaking Bolshevik – that is, it used ideology (an instrument of truth) in order to remove the activists that contested power as a source of truth,[174] while it was actually destroying a network that contested its sovereignty (the veterans) or that hindered its action (Roller).[175] The downfall of Roller had been decided months before, based on a series of speculative and biased criteria in the report by Niculescu. Once the veterans recorded their memories, the opportunity of accusing them and Roller in ideological terms was given to the leadership. This could frame the general tactical change in the cultural sphere as a concentric effort of many Party networks to remove him, under the re-established Party supremacy.

[172] Roller was eliminated politically in an indirect way, but as a consequence of this event. During a meeting between Romanian and Soviet historians organized by the Central Committee of the PCR in June 1958, Andrei Oțetea, director of the Academy's History Institute, proclaimed publicly the *unscientific* manner in which Roller had published the documents in his editions of the History of Romania, announcing that these sources would be republished in their entirety. The Soviet delegation raised no objections, a sign that the Soviets were no longer interested in protecting a Soviet version of Romanian history; Stoica, 87. This was one of the results of Soviet de-Stalinization, having as a consequence the marginalization of supporters of the Stalinist version of Soviet ideology, as Roller was; Iacob, *Stalin, the Historians, the Nation*, 129–130.

[173] ANIC, ISISP, A-6/1, *Referat cu privire la activitatea Institutului de Istorie a Partidului de pe lîngă CC al PCR*, f. 105. The archival documents do not show who was actually removed from the Institute.

[174] 'We must cease once and for all to describe the effects of power in negative terms: it 'excludes', it 'represses', it 'censors', it 'abstracts', it 'masks', it 'conceals'. In fact power produces; it produces reality; it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth. The individual and the knowledge that may be gained of him belong to this production'; Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: the Birth of the Prison* (London: Penguin, 1991), 194.

[175] 'We are not only, in Foucault's words, animals whose life as living beings is at issue in […] politics, but also – inversely – citizens whose very politics is at issue in their natural body'; Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, (ed. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 105.

4.8 Control re-established: the post-Roller Institute

In July 1958, a major event took place in Romania: the last Red Army troops were withdrawn from the country. Gheorghiu-Dej succeeded in convincing Khrushchev of his loyalty, proved by his support during the Hungarian Revolution of 1956 and by many internal measures to secure the domestic situation. The main executors of these internal measures were Leonte Răutu, Nicolae Ceauşescu, and Alexandru Drăghici. Drăghici and Ceauşescu organized a mass purge within the Party of all those who expressed objections to Gheorghiu-Dej's politics. They repressed the uprisings organized by the university students during and shortly after the Hungarian Revolution, arranging for some of the students to be sentenced after sham trials.[176] In June 1958, laws were implemented in the criminal law code that made it easier to arrest and prosecute all possible opponents of the regime, enlarging the definition of "class enemy" and "conspirer", while opening up the possibility of meting out death sentences.

Ceauşescu's counterpart in the cultural field was Leonte Răutu, who threatened the intellectuals who did not follow the Party strictures with old Stalinist methods, conveyed by old Stalinist expressions, while pretending that these actions served to ensure de-Stalinization. In September 1959, Răutu denounced the 'crimes' of those intellectuals, 'stray elements, or former hostile elements, who are determined to contaminate the Party and the honest workers'.[177] This purge also affected the Party History Institute, even if the death of Mihail Roller provided an opportunity to conduct the purge in the smoothest possible way, since the majority of the historians and some of the activists had been in open conflict with Roller.

The re-establishment of stricter control by the Party, and of public and cultural life, also affected the Party History Institute and its personnel. In the post-Roller Institute, the composition of the cadres changed in various ways. A part of the leadership managed to remain: Clara Cuşnir-Mihailovici[178] and Nicolae Petrovici,[179] as well as Niculescu, and Gheorghe Matei

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[176] Tismaneanu, *Stalinism for all seasons*, 166. Bottoni, Transilvania Rossa, 240–247.
[177] Constantiniu, *De la Răutu şi Roller*, 205.
[178] Ştefan, 7–8.
[179] Ştefanescu, 437, "Anale de Istorie" entry. A report prepared by Paul Niculescu-Mizil asked also for the removal of Nicolae Petrovici, director of *Anale de Istorie* and the only person close to Roller in the direction of the Institute, but this proposal was turned down by Răutu; ANIC, ISISP, A-6/1, *Referat cu privire la activitatea Institutului de Istorie a Partidului de pe lîngă CC al PCR*, f. 105.

were promoted vice-directors. The newcomers were director Gheorghe Vasilichi[180] and vice-director Nicolae Goldberger.[181]

Once it was clarified that Roller's decision to record and transcript the recollections of the veterans did not amount to a conspiracy within the Institute, the Party preferred to keep the propagandists who had shown loyalty and adaptability to the changed circumstances.[182] However, the professionalization of the cadres was partially halted in order to secure the control of the organization. New unqualified cadres of working-class origin were recruited, and relocated to the political section of the Institute directly from work in factories, in order to ensure firm ideological control. The integration of this category of staff in the Institute was difficult, since they immediately started to ask for higher salaries, looking at the historians and the Direction with envy since they were considerably better paid.[183] The new recruits also seem to have feared conspiracies within the Institute, a matter that made the working climate quite gloomy.[184] Another category of recruits was the specialised cadres educated in the Soviet Union, appointed as sector-heads due to their professional abilities.[185] In addition, there were

[180] Gheorghe Vasilichi (1902–1974) was a member of the Party from the thirties; his affiliation with Dej allowed him to obtain important positions within the regime, like minister of Education after 1948. He was hardly qualified for this position, having only attended primary school. Titu Georgescu described him as a 'decent man […]. He did not come with pretentions or attitudes of command' (Georgescu, *Tot un fel de istorie*, 219). Vasilichi told researchers openly that he had not obtained any higher education, but that he had received some political preparation and that he knew the history of the Party, having lived it.

[181] Nicolae Goldberger (1904–1970) was a veteran with several connections to the Soviet Stalinist leaders. He was responsible for the Commission of Propaganda (1948–1952), director of the Political Bureau of the army (1948–1950), and rector of the Institute of Social Science of the CC of the PCR from 1956. He was a Stalinist, held the Comintern in great esteem, and mixed this ideological admiration with 'a persevering action to inject his faith or the goals that he perceived' (Georgescu, *Tot un fel de istorie*, 220) in his collaborators. In 1956, following the orders of Gheorghiu-Dej, Goldberger, together with Valter Roman and Iosif Ardeleanu (the latter working at the Institute), went to Budapest to convince Imre Nagy to flee the country and accept the political asylum offered him by the Romanian government.

[182] Iacob, *Stalin, the Historians, the Nation*, 128.

[183] Georgescu, *Tot un fel de istorie*, 222.

[184] Ibidem.

[185] Ibid., 223. These were Nathan Lupu, Ion Gheorghiu, Vasile Hurmuz, Gheorghe Haupt, Nicoale Copoiu, Gheorghe Unc, Damian Hurezeanu, and Ion Oprea.

also 11 new researchers with a degree in history,[186] but the majority of the recruits (33) still did not completed their graduate studies, in spite of the fact that they had been required since 1954 to have graduated in history.[187]

After the elimination of Roller, a small number of renowned historians such as Constantin Daicoviciu and Andrei Oțetea were invited to participate in the scientific council[188] – Daicoviciu also became a member. At the same time, many activists were excluded from the council only to be replaced with other activists. For example, Petre Niculescu, director of the Institute archive, was dismissed in 1958 but quickly re-appointed. Another example was veteran Leonte Tismăneanu, previously recalled from Prague only to be put aside as a factionist and deviationist, and later to be expelled from the Party in 1960.[189] Others became subjects of direct attacks by scholars. For example, Solomon Ştirbu was subject to a direct attack from the new director of the Institute of History at the Academy, Andrei Oțetea.[190]

4.9 Conclusions

The mechanisms of history-writing during early Romanian communism have been presented in this chapter, with descriptions of their origin and their development during and after the big paradigm shift of 1955. While the few previous scholarly efforts to frame the relationship between power and history-writing have enhanced the importance of control and the

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[186] Those were Alexandru Savu, Ion Rauş, Janeta Benditer, Gheorghe Matei, Augustin Deac, D. Rădulescu, C. Bărbulescu, Georgeta Tudoran, Petre Ignat, V. Petrişor, Robert Deutsch. See V. Georgescu, *Tot un fel de istorie*, 223.

[187] Those were Ion Mocanu, Vasile Varga, Viorica David, Vasile Topală, Simion Cutişteanu, Mihai Francisc, B. Delman, H. Singer, P. Nichita, Gavril Marcuson, I. Briceag, Nicolae Goldberger, Saşa Muşat, E. Ghenad, I. Eschenazy, R. Vist, B. Kolker, J. Mosolova, L. Şimandan, E. Niri, Gheorghe Adorian, Ekaterina Maximenco, L. Bălan, N. Blană, I. Toacă, Gheorghe Ţuţui, M. Lungeanu, N. G. Munteanu, M. Tălăngescu, Gheorghe Zaharia, V. Rață, A. Petri, C. Nicolae. See Georgescu, *Tot un fel de istorie*, 224–225.

[188] ANIC, ISISP, A-6/1, *Membri Consiliului Ştiinţific al Institutului de Istorie a Partidului de pe lînga CC al PMR* (Hotărîrea Biroului Politic al CC al PMR nr. 481 din 2 iulie 1955), f. 127–128. The document refers to a meeting in November 1958.

[189] Tismăneanu, *Ghilotina de scrum* (Iaşi: Polirom, 2002), 24–25.

[190] Oțetea, in the previous years, had attacked vehemently the book Solomon Ştirbu, *Răscoala din 1821 şi legăturile ei cu evenimentele internaţionale* (Bucharest: Editura de stat pentru literatură politică, 1956). The attack had been carried out in a review: Oțetea, Andrei. 'O nouă istorie a mişcării din 1821', *Studii* 2 (1957): 201–212. At the time of the publication, the Party sided with Ştirbu and tacited Oțetea.

devaluation of scholarship standards during Stalinism, my contribution has shown that control could easily be manipulated by the propagandists in their struggle for resources. Furthermore, this chapter has shown that, once the paradigm of Stalinism declined, the Party leadership dismissed only the former top-propagandists of Stalinism, accusing them of being responsible for cultural Stalinism itself. Nevertheless, the Party saved a huge number of lower propagandists and veterans who, in order to consolidate their positions, presented themselves as post-Bolshevik "groups", and tried to make their voices heard. But, despite those attempts, the leadership decided which requests to crush and which ones to incorporate: the veterans were silenced, the national ideology was heightened. All for the greater good – of sovereignty.

During Stalinism, the Romanian Workers' Party pretended to incarnate the greater good. Since Marxism-Leninism was considered scientific, and since the Party was the master of its "Truth", the sovereignty of the Party produced "Truth" itself, as power and knowledge.[191] Scholarship was not needed, since the sovereign power was the source of knowledge, as in pre-modern times.[192] The field of history-writing was therefore devalued. In this sense, under those conditions, scholarship was not a resource for political power as intended by Ash. The bourgeois historians were seen as enemies of the Party and therefore of the people of the new civilization and of its values.[193] Cultural capital was not one of these values, since the Party itself was the only authority on knowledge to be recognized. Therefore, the Party did not need legitimation; control and repression substituted it – and the backup of the Soviet Union on these matters provided fundamental help in reproducing this system.

Nevertheless, the struggle for resources typical of the modern relationship between power and history-writing was present, even if in peculiar terms: with many strategies, the Institute and its inherent networks presented themselves as vital to the field of Party history while attempting to delegitimize their institutional or network competitors. These agents demon-

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[191] See Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: the Birth of the Prison* (London: Penguin, 1991), 194; Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 105.

[192] Joseph Canning, Edmund King, Martial Staub (eds.), *Knowledge, Discipline and Power in the Middle Ages. Essays in Honour of David Luscombe* (London: Brill, 2012), xi–x: in 'pre-modern European societies […] effort was undertaken to centralise power. […] The period between the 12th and the 16th centuries was characterised by an incessant institutional struggle between centralising and decentralising tendencies'.

[193] Kotkin, 331.

strated that the historical fiction of the greater good (the substitute for history-writing) could be developed by competition, making use of several strategies of representations of the self and of the adversaries, in a search for their legitimation. Scholarly standards, in their tasks, were useless, since they were entitled not to write history, but Party documents which contained the justification of the greater good that the Party represented.

Therefore, for the good of the Party, falsification of history was acceptable. But, far from being simply a function of power (as Marx thought), or a method to further communism,[194] the control of history-writing by the propagandists allowed those who controlled them to twist them to gaining an advantage in the struggle for resources. This was *the control* of knowledge as a direct source of power, in a dystopic version of Francis Bacon's thought. The conflict between Roller and the Cuşnir-Mihailovici is an example of the consequences of the lack of standards in history-writing in Stalinist times – it was a totally heteronomous process[195] inspired by unexpressed and unspoken goals that were presented, rhetorically, as concerns for the organization's performance and for the ideological purity, but that were fundamentally resource-oriented. Therefore, proficiency in "speaking Bolshevik",[196] apart from being a value, was a way to success, even if scholarly competence was not really needed.

With the reaction to de-Stalinization, a new modernisation of the relationship between power and scholarship took place. Political power, whose sovereignty was at risk due to the changing political orientation of the Soviet Union, needed to re-establish old national values to legitimize its sovereignty. Scholarship and the formerly secluded historians became necessary, as Iacob and Stoica pointed out.[197] Scholarship was a resource for political power, as Ash theorized for Nazi Germany; but, in this case, the resources offered by political power came with strong conditions. The task of professional historians and educated propagandists was clear: they should develop a form of historical knowledge useful to provide legitimacy for the Party. Despite this modernisation, history-writing continued to be domesticated by the sovereign power and by its servants: that is, no

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[194] Rura, cit.

[195] In the sense of "heteronomy" given by P. Bourdieu: the quest for 'success'; see P. Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production*, 38–39.

[196] Krylova, cit.

[197] Iacob, *Stalinism, Historians, and the Nation*, cit.; Stoica, 121–164; See also Iacob, 'Co-option and control'.

knowledge was *per se* good, but only to the extent to which the Party could profit from it. This general orientation was accompanied by a general taboo: no knowledge that could have questioned soveregnity was allowed. Consequently, no direct attack on the old institutional structures and the higher propagandists which shared, with the leadership, the responsibilities of Stalinism was possible.

Nevertheless, scholarship had effectively a space of manoeuvre that allowed the autonomous scholarly institutions to develop autonomous research. While for almost one decade the Party institutions for historical education and propaganda had facilitated access to resources, with the reaction to de-Stalinization new competitors joined the field of Party history-writing, namely the historians and their institutions. Formerly deprived of any agency, they could access to the resources, since values had shifted towards the possession of cultural capital. Consequently, the Party propagandists and veterans had to develop better skills in order to position themselves near the re-emerging networks of historians, since the latter had *auctoritas* given by a set of competences developed by their professional education, which the Party activists had not.

Shaping national-communism.
The Party History Institute between 1959 and 1964

5.1 From communism to national-communism: international politics and the new meta-narrative canon

This chapter analyses the reconfiguration of Romanian Party and non-Party institutions for history research in the transition from Soviet-type communism to national-communism, from 1959 to 1964. Previous research has pointed out that the new strategy was carried out by co-opting the intellectuals, since their scholarly expertise was useful for the sovereign power to create its legitimacy. Nevertheless, this perspective does not consider the institutional dimension of the transition to national-communism, and the role played by Party institutions. My claim is that, if the analysis of national-communism focuses on the institutional dimension of history-writing, the process of separation of knowledge from power makes evident that Party structures were not devalued by this passage, continuing to be instruments of the Party. Instead, this transition permitted the scholarly institutions to be reconciled with the Party goals. Focusing on the positioning of the Institute in the field of history-writing, the positions of the scholarly institutions appear as well as deprived of proper autonomy.

5.1.1 Constructing a canon with available elements

The national-communist meta-narrative canon was built with the available elements in order to constitute a new kind of legitimacy for the Romanian Communist Party that can be characterised as anti-Stalinist, Leninist, and national while *de facto* the Stalinist system continued to exist in the state structures and in the command mode of the Party towards its members and the population in general. But what political reasons lay behind the passage

from communism to national-communism, and how did the latter canon evolve in the early 1960s?

On all international questions, until the beginning of the 1960s, the Romanian delegates always sounded more pro-Soviet than the other East European representatives. Formally, nothing had changed in the relationship between the Soviet Union and Romania after the de-Stalinization process. The inter-Party relationship continued to be conducted under the banner of internationalism led by the Soviet Union, while cultural exchanges and Party graduate education in the Soviet Union of Romanian cadres, as well as Soviet cultural institutions in Romania, continued to exist. But the Soviets were wrong in believing in the loyalty of the Romanian communists.

The loyalty to Khrushchev allowed Gheorghiu-Dej to assume undisputed and personal power in all domestic matters: by the end of the 1950s all his potential enemies within the Party had been expelled, while other powerful comrades had been demoted to minor positions.[1] Khrushchev did not fully understand the strategy of de-Stalinization that was implemented by the Romanian leadership, which included the country's economic autonomy as one of its major features. Even though he was present at the 1960 Congress of the RWP, he did not voice any objections.[2] The Soviets could actually have seen an indication of this trend in 1959, in the context of the 100th anniversary of the union of the Romanian Principates, when massive demonstrations were organized by the regime for the first time for an event that was completely unrelated to the history of the Party or the workers' movement, but fundamental for national history.[3] The Soviet Union exercised very lax political control over Romania after 1958, due to the seriously escalating conflict with Albania and China, a conflict where Romania positioned itself as a loyal ally. The politics endorsed by Mao in China were little understood apart from the propagandistic aspects, and most of the Romanian leadership considered Mao's positions as adventurism.[4]

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[1] Miron Constantinescu had been one of the leading ideologists of the Party, and retained important state and Party functions after 1948. In 1957, he was marginalized from political life by Gheorghiu-Dej, but appointed director of the Party History Institute for the year 1958. See Ştefan Bosomitu, *Miron Constantinescu. O biografie* (Bucharest, Humanitas, 2014), 499.

[2] Tismăneanu, *Stalinism for All Seasons*, 170.

[3] As Stan Stoica noted, the 80th anniversary of the War of Independence in 1957 received no attention from the regime, while the 50th anniversary of the peasants' revolution of 1907 was the most celebrated event of the year. Stoica, 146 n95.

[4] Ibidem.

Until the 22nd Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU), Gheorghiu-Dej seemed to be completely uninterested in the Mao-ist experiences and their ideological bases.[5] After the 22nd Congress of the CPSU, in October 1961, the conflict between Moscow and Beijing escalated, culminating in a second wave of de-Stalinization in the Soviet Union. Once again, Gheorghiu-Dej had to face the potential risks of de-Stalinization: his leadership might be questioned, and he might become implicated in the Stalinist crimes of the past. The Romanian leader was forced to play a difficult game. One month after the 22nd Congress, on November 30th – December 5th 1961, before the Central Committee, he offered unconditional adherence to the de-Stalinizing tenets, while directly attacking Albania, its fostering of a personality cult, and Stalin's activities in the past. In his speech he drafted the first version of the recent history of the Romanian Communist Party. More than at any preceding moment, Party history became vital for the strategy de-Stalinization, justifying the political actions of the leadership.

Gheorghiu-Dej maintained that the problems created by Stalinism had already been solved under his leadership. According to Paul Niculescu-Mizil, head of the Propaganda Department, Gheorghiu-Dej presented himself as the saviour of the Party from the attacks of a row of factions of intra-

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[5] *Stenograma şedinţei plenare a CC al PMR din data de 19–20 decembrie 1960*, published in Dan Cătănuş, *Între Beijing şi Moscova*. România şi conflictul sovieto-chinez, 1957–1965, Vol. I, (Bucharest: Institutul Naţional Pentru Studiul Totalitarismului, 2004), 133. In December 1960, Barbu Zaharescu, at that time ambassador in Beijing, and Gheorghe Vasilichi suggested to the members of the Central Committee that they should seriously consider Maoism from an ideological point of view. The Chinese leadership had refused in 1957 to subscribe to the fight against fractionism proposed by the CPSU, which in real terms meant the continued primacy of the Soviet Union in the leadership of world communism. Zaharescu invited his comrades to consider the particular conditions of each socialist country, a view that could justify the Chinese version of Marxist-Leninism without considering it deviationist or fractionist. But since Gheorghiu-Dej found himself comfortable with de-Stalinized Stalinist ideology and formal loyalty to Soviet Union, he replied ironically: 'a Chinese-made Marxism-Leninism…a Romanian Marxism-Leninism, an Hungarian one…", clearly indicating his scepticism of this ideological reformulation. But Zaharescu, indicating the ideological standpoint of China in particular, had clearly pointed out one of the elements that would later become a vital part of the national-communist meta-narrative canon. Zaharescu was obliged on two occasions to perform humiliating self-criticism for having opposed the condemnation of China, saying that he had treated the matter 'as if it was scholarly research, and not as political action'; *Stenograma şedinţei plenare a CC al PMR din data de 19–20 decembrie 1960*, published in Dan Cătănuş, *Între Beijing şi Moscova*, 133, 140 n129.

Party enemies, cursorily described as Stalinists: Ştefan Foriş[6] and Lucreţiu Pătrăşcanu[7] in the 1940s, the Pauker group in the early 1950s, and more recently Chişinevschi and Constantinescu, who were quitely removed from leading Party positions.[8] With the exception of Foriş and Pătrăşcanu, all the others were described as part of a 'factional, anti-Party group [that] promoted with great intensity the cult of Stalin's person, and tried consistently […] to introduce into Party and state life methods and practices generated by this cult that were alien to Leninism'.[9] At the same time, Gheorghiu-Dej justified himself by explaining that this anti-Party group had managed to cloak their activities, and that 'for many comrades, and of course for the leadership of the Party, the causes of the negative impact on Party life were not clear'.[10] This became the meta-narrative canon of the Party's history, with full support from the veterans.[11]

While cultivating a new national line of Party history domestically, the relationship with the Soviet Union changed even more drastically in 1962. Khrushchev did not inform the Warsaw Pact allies when deciding to send missiles to Cuba, nor when he decided to withdraw them after the American ultimatum. Besides considering Khrushchev's actions as irrespons-

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[6] Ştefan Foriş was the Party Secretary General of the RCP from 1940 to 1944. He was arrested in 1944 and executed in 1946 by the Soviet-lead *Securitate*. His murder was due to the intra-Party struggle for the leadership, Gheorghiu-Dej being the main beneficiary of his death. See Vladimir Tismăneanu, 'Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej and the Romanian Workers' Party: From De-Sovietization to the Emergence of National-Communism', - *Working Paper* 37, "Cold War International History Project", Woodrow Wilson International Center For Scholars, Washington D. C., May 2002, 2–3.

[7] Lucreţiu Pătrăşcanu was one of the few intellectuals in the leadership of the Communist Party during the interwar and popular democracy periods. Being politically dangerous for Gheorghiu-Dej's leadership, he was arrested in 1948 on the accusation of chauvinism, and executed in 1954. See: Lavinia Betea, *Lucreţiu Pătrăşcanu. Moartea unui lider comunist* (Bucharest: Editura Curtea Veche, 2006).

[8] This purge also touched Constantin Pârvulescu, who was excluded at that plenum from the Central Committee. See Ştefan Bosomitu, 'Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej şi Miron Constantinescu', in, *Spectrele lui Dej: incursiuni în biografia şi regimul unui dictator*, eds. Ştefan Bosomitu, Mihai Burcea (Bucharest: Polirom, 2012), 193 n3. See also Tudor, Alina; Cătănuş, Dan (eds.). *O destalinizare ratată. Culisele cazului Miron Constantinescu-Iosif Chişinevschi (1956–1961)* (Bucharest: Editura Elion, 2001).

[9] Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, *Dare de seamna la plenarea CC al PMR din 30 noiembrie – 5 decembrie 1961*, in Gheorghiu-Dej, *Articole şi Cuvîntari 1961–1962* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1962), 175–226, 198; Gheorghiu-Dej summarizes the Party history between 1943–1958 in ibid., 197–210.

[10] Ibid., 207.

[11] Tismăneanu, *Stalinism for all Seasons*, 174.

ible,[12] the Romanian leadership also considered him to be dangerous because of his unpredictability.[13] Furthermore, the Romanian leadership decided against deepening the economic integration of the Comecon countries.[14] The Soviet leaders chose to disregard the complaints of the Romanians, and the mistrust matured into open tension in 1963[15] when the Romanians openly sympathized with China in the columns of the World Marxist Review.[16]

These elements, together with the mistrust expressed openly to Soviet representatives regarding the presence of Soviet secret agents in Romania, brought about an open clash between Romania and the Soviet Union, culminating in 1964 with the so-called "declaration of autonomy". This was a fundamental Party declaration adopted by the CC of the Party on the problems of the international communist and workers' movement. According to the tenets of the de-Stalinization process, the declaration stated, Leninist norms should be applied in the relationship between socialist parties and states respecting the principle of the equality of rights of each Party, of non-interference in the internal affairs of the other parties, of the exclusive right of each Party to solve the internal and organizational prob-

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[12] For having insulted the Romanian leadership in 1962. See Haupt, 682.

[13] As indicated by his own words to the Romanians in 1963, Khrushchev knew that by sending the missiles to Cuba he was 'going on an adventure, but there was no other solution'. See *Notă cu privire la discuţile ce au avut loc cu prilejul vizitei în RPR a tov. Hruşiov în tren, maşină şi cu alte ocazii în tîmpul deplasării la locurile de vânătoare între zilele de 3–7 octombrie 1963*, published in Cătănuş, *Între Beijing şi Moscova*, 264–272, 270.

[14] The Comecon plans were considered by Gheorghiu-Dej as a 'diminishing of sovereignty [that] determines the mixture in internal affairs of other countries'; *Stenograma şedinţei Biroului Politic din 26–27 februarie 1963*, quoted in Cătănuş, *Între Beijing şi Moscova*, 15.

[15] See *Stenograma şedinţei Biroului Politic din 26–27 februarie 1963, and Stenograma discuţiilor avute în ziua de 26 mai 1963 la Snagov între delegaţia de activişti ai PCUS în frunte cu tovarăşul Podgornâi şi membrii Biroului Politic al CC al PMR*, published in *Între Beijing şi Moscova*, ed. D. Cătănuş 181–204, 217–229. In 1962, an economic plan for the integration of the economies of the Comecon countries in the sense of a division of labour among its constituencies was presented by Soviet economic geographer E. B. Valev. The plans prescribed for Romania an agricultural development bereft of industrialization. Gheorghiu-Dej disagreed, and the Romanian representative at the Comecon refused officially to condone the plan in February 1963. Gheorghiu-Dej pointed out that any further pressure would result in Romania leaving the Comecon. See Tismăneanu, *Stalinism for all Seasons*, 179–180.

[16] Haupt, 682. Prime Minister Ion Gheorghe Maurer and Nicolae Ceauşescu published several articles in *World Marxism Review*, backed by Barbu Zaharescu who, as representative of the Romanians in the editorial board of the review, opposed the hegemony of the pro-Soviet representatives. See Tismăneanu, *Stalinism for all Seasons*, 181.

lems, and to orient the members on the internal and international political problems. The declaration also contained an explicit attack on the Soviet Union, which was accused of using methods and practices generated by the personality cult.[17] This fiery declaration contributed to shaping the basic elements of the national-communist meta-narrative canon that were later reproduced massively by different cultural and propaganda means: these elements were shaped by 'a strict respect for national independence and sovereignty, equal rights, reciprocal [economic] advantage, help between comrades, non-interference in internal affairs, and respect of territorial integrity'.[18] The April Declaration gave shape to the ideological standpoints elaborated as single, incoherent elements in the aftermath of the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU. It became a cultural tool when elaborating a concrete action strategy in response to the second wave of de-Stalinization launched by the Twenty-Second Congress of the CPSU.

The RWP presented itself, in the *Declaration*, as Leninist, striving for communist unity, anti-Stalinist, and supporting the national road to communism, which required the respect of different methods adopted on the road to communism by each socialist country.[19] These ideological standpoints were substantiated internationally by the deepening of relationships

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[17] RWP, *Declarație cu privire la posiția Partidului Muncitoresc Romîn în problemele mișcării comuniste și muncitorești internaționale adoptată de Plenara lărgită a CC al PMR din aprilie 1964* (Bucharest, Editura Politică, 1964), 54.

[18] These key points of the April Declaration were summarized for the first time in *Viața economică* (24/1964). For the different messages that the declaration was meant to send to the audiences at home and abroad see Tismăneanu, *Stalinism for all Seasons*, 183. See the analysis of M. Croitor on the preparation of the Declaration of April 1964 in Mihai Croitor, *Gheorghiu-Dej și "Declarația de Independență" din 1964*, in Bosomitu, Burcea (eds.), *Spectrele lui Dej*, 295–318. The Declaration was preceded in 1963 by the strengthening of the political relationship between China and Romania; see Cătănuș, *Între Beijing și Moscova*, 16. For both China and the Soviet Union, it represented an ideological standpoint far removed from classic internationalism, embracing the principle of polycentrism, the unity in diversity already emphasised by Tito and Palmiro Togliatti. See Tismaneanu, 'Cartea Stalinismului național: Declarația PMR din aprilie 1964', in *Contributors.ro* on http://www.contributors.ro/global-europa/carta-stalinis mului-national-declaratia-pmr-din-aprilie-1964/ After 1956, Togliatti mentioned polycentrism several times, and reassessed its basic principle (the unity of the struggle in the respect for the autonomy of each fraternal Party). In April 1964 he opposed the decision of the CPSU to organize an international conference in order to condemn the Chinese Communist Party, since the action of a single Communist Party should not have to be approved by international organizations. These theses were addressed to the CPSU in August 1964, in a letter acknowledged as "the Memorial of Yalta". See Donald Sassoon, *Togliatti e il partito di massa: il PCI dal 1944 al 1964* (Roma: Castelvecchi, 2014).

[19] RWP, *Declarație cu privire la posiția*, cit.

with Western countries,[20] and domestically by the release of political prisoners gaoled during Stalinism.[21] These actions, as well as the rhetoric of an anti-Soviet and patriotic Party would be endorsed fully by Nicolae Ceaușescu after 1965, and implemented by other no less propagandistic and pseudo-liberal reforms that would prevent the national and international audience from understanding the underlying continuity with the Stalinist regime. These new elements of political discourse were supported constantly, during the years to come, by a renewed cultural milieu and institutions, in the liberal arts and the humanities.

By these new tactics, the RWP sought to establish its legitimacy at both domestic and international levels, with the support of the intellectuals and with the full control over the Party cultural institutions. The next sub-chapter explores more deeply how the search for legitimacy was implemented through Party history and national history.

5.1.2 Grafting the national-communist canon on culture and historiography: institutions and reviews

Shaping and defining the national-communist political discourse, the regime aimed at disseminating the political canon in the cultural sphere in order to acquire legitimacy in the eyes of domestic and international audiences. The propaganda apparatus, which had absorbed and now controlled the cultural institutions, was given the specific task to turn the politically imposed canon into works of scholarly character. While Gheorghiu-Dej inspired the general content of the canon with keywords and concepts, the propaganda apparatus led by Leonte Răutu had to define and diffuse it in the liberal arts and humanities.

After 1959, the regime started to reduce the budget of the institutions tasked with developing cultural relations between Romania and the Soviet

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[20] For example, with the United States in 1963 and 1964, and with France in 1964. Tismăneanu, *Stalinism for all Seasons*, 182.

[21] Between 1962 and 1964, the regime released roughly 12,700 political prisoners who had belonged to other interwar parties. The majority of the prisoners, about 9,600, were released due to the amnesty for political prisoners proclaimed by the regime in July 1964 (Decret 411/1964). Despite their liberation, the secret police continued to keep them under surveillance until 1989. To the most prominent figures receiving amnesty, the regime offered minor positions in the new political system in exchange for a declaration of support. See Paula Mihailov Chiciuc, 'Liberi, dar vegheați', *Jurnalul*, 21 August 2006, available on http://jurnalul.ro/suplimente/editie-de-colec tie/liberi-dara-vegheati-14326.html

Union and stressing the historical and cultural legacies between the two countries. These institutions practically disappeared in 1963–64.[22] Similar problems were encountered in non-academic institutions for education geared towards the study of Russian and Soviet topics, which were reduced in size[23] or closed.[24] These measures were aimed at optimizing the resources and at allocating the personnel at the regime's disposal to bring the new meta-narrative canon to a scholarly standard.[25] At the same time, the old institution of the Romanian Academy, whose contribution to historiography was neglected and deprecated during the Stalinist era, was now reconsidered and re-evaluated for its prestige and its important contributions to the development of national culture.[26] This was due to an increasingly benevolent general strategy towards national ideology, which served as a defence against Party propagandists who strove to exert a constant surveillance of the Academy's historians and their writings. In a very short time, by the mid-1960s, the negative description of the Academy had given way to a much more favourable view, also among the propagandists.[27]

[22] One specific case is the ARLUS society (*Asociația Română pentru strângerea Legăturilor cu Uniunea Sovietică – Romanian Association for the development of relationships with the Soviet Union*), founded in 1944. ARLUS published in Stalinist times large print-runs of translations of Russian and Soviet authors; it ran three reviews (*Veac Nou, Caietele ARLUS, Analele Româno-Sovietice*) and a whole system of local libraries. By 1964, the Association had practically disappeared due to lack of financing.

[23] The Maxim Gorki Institute was reduced in size and incorporated into the Faculty of Slavic Languages and Literature of the Institute of Foreign Languages and Literature. OSA Archive, *Background Report – Rumanian Unit, Bucharest Maxim Gorki Institute incorporated into New Institute*, 24 September 1963, available on http://hdl.handle.net/ 10891/osa:ff61253e-084b-4d7d-9c93-041ef024e533

[24] In 1964, the Institute of Romanian-Soviet Studies (Institut de Studii Româno-Sovietice), established in 1947 and educating students in 14 different subjects connected to Soviet topics, taught in the Russian language, was closed down entirely. Regarding the institutions aiming at popularising Soviet culture, the change of canon by the regime resulted in 1963 in the closure of the Romanian-Russian Museum, another gigantic centralistic organization with sections in 27 cities. Georgescu, *Politică și istorie*, 22.

[25] An example of this is shown in the biography of Vlad Georgescu: a graduate in history and employed as a museographer at the Romanian-Russian Museum (Muzeu Romîn-Rus). When the museum was closed down he was recruited to the newly founded Institute for South-East European Studies by Mihai Berza, who recognized his scholarly skills. Stoica, 161.

[26] Ibidem. The election of historians Mihai Berza, Dionise Pippidi, Vasile Maciu and Ștefan Pascu as correspondent members of the Academy in 1963 should be seen as a recognition of their professionalism. This process of rehabilitation of professional historians in the Academy elections began in 1955; see Mihalache, 129–135.

[27] Georgescu, *Politică și istorie*, 48, 48 n2.

While the institutions aimed at promoting Soviet culture experienced a very negative trend, and the role of traditional institutions was reconsidered, new institutions were created in different parts of the national territory by the Ministry of Education and the Academy.[28] On similar lines as the creation of new scholarly institutions[29] and journals,[30] there was also a transformation, after the April Declaration in 1964, of the History Institute of the Academy into the "N. Iorga" History Institute. This symbolized a full re-evaluation of the most prominent individuals of the national cultural past. This meant a new turn in cultural politics, a process beginning in 1959 as a result of the pressure from the historians at the universities and the Academy, where the national classics of Romanian historiography were still used as textbooks,[31] and against the opposition of the Party propagandists, who long remained loyal to Stalinist culture. This process reached its completion in 1964, when a whole issue of *Studii* review was dedicated to the - rehabilitation of Iorga, with contributions mainly from the non-Party historians but also, interestingly enough, from Titu Georgescu at the Party

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[28] The number of history faculties increased from three to five: in addition to the existing faculties in Bucharest, Cluj, and Iași, two new faculties of history and geography were founded at the University of Timişoara (1959) and Craiova (1961). Ştefanescu, *Enciclopedia*, cit. In 1969 a new Faculty of History was founded in Sibiu as an affiliate of Cluj University.

[29] In 1963, a new Institute for South-East European Studies was founded in Bucharest under the direction of historian Mihai Berza, a former disciple of Gheorghe Brațianu, historian and leader of the National Liberal Party in the interwar period. They had both been on the editorial board of the review *Revue Historique du Sud-Est Européen*, during the interwar period, a review that was terminated in 1946. The interwar Institute and its *Revue* had been founded by Nicole Iorga as scholarly and political instruments to increase and disseminate knowledge about the different cultures in the region, and to attenuate cultural conflicts. The new Institute had similar aims and aspirations. It was meant to give a favourable image of Romania as an international actor capable of establishing pragmatic relationships based on dialogue. In fact, the Institute originated at an international conference on the Balkans sponsored by UNESCO in 1962, after which an International Association for South-East European Studies was founded and based in Bucharest. In Stoica, 162–163.

[30] In the field of scholarly reviews, the Romanian Academy started to publish in 1962 *Revue Roumaine d'Histoire* under the leadership of the top-level historians at the History Institute of the Academy, Bucharest University, and the Party History Institute (in the last institution, Gheorghe Matei became a member of the editorial board). *Revue Roumaine d'Histoire* assumed a pivotal role in promoting Romanian historiography abroad, publishing articles signed by both Party and non-Party historians, presenting the results of professional historians side by side with more dogmatic articles written by the figurehead historians at the Party History Institute. Stan, *Politică și Istorie*, 160–161. Stoica, 161–162.

[31] Georgescu, *Tot un fel de istorie*; Stan, *Politică și istorie*.

History Institute.[32] However, the history discipline had its authority restored, not its autonomy.

The reallocation of resources to history institutions had the specific aim of preparing for the return of Romanian historiography to the international scene in order to promote the legitimization of the new political course. While the 10th International Congress of Historical Sciences, held in Rome in 1955, was attended by only four Romanian historians, in 1960, at the following congress held in Stockholm, their number had increased to 18, and only two of these were propagandists.[33] The regime obviously needed historians who could promote at an international level the historiographical theses developed by the Academy and the university researchers on topics close to national history. This was necessary in order to counter interpretations of Romanian history written by foreign historians[34] and Romanian scholars in exile.[35]

The new political course also had certain consequences for the most important historiographical project supported by the regime, a (or better, *the*) *History of Romania*. Officially launched by the 2nd Congress of the Party in 1955, this project was given immense resources by the regime in terms of institutional and economic support. A balance was struck between the persistent dogmatic Stalinist canon of the representatives of the Party History Institute and the innovations introduced by the university and Academy historians (the old ones, educated in the interwar period, and the

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[32] Georgescu's contribution was an extract of a manuscript that the editor-in-chief of Editura Politică, Valter Roman, Party veteran and former member of the International Brigade, had refused to publish in 1960, since Georgescu had characterised Iorga as an antifascist. Georgescu, *Tot un fel de istorie*, 250–253. On the manuscript Roman wrote 'it is inappropriate [for publishing]', 153. Georgescu's complete manuscript was later published in 1966: Titu Georgescu, *Iorga împotriva hitlerismului* (Bucharest: Editura Ştiinţifică, 1966).

[33] The Romanian delegation contained propagandists Vasile Varga and Nicolae Goldberger from the Institute, and historians Petre Constantiescu-Iaşi, Andrei Oţetea, Constantin Daicoviciu, Emil Petrovici, Emil Condurachi, Ion Nistor, Mihai Berza, Dionise Pippidi, Francisc Pall, Mircea Petrescu-Dâmboviţa, Ştefan Pascu, Victor Popovici, Victor Cherestesiu, Ladislau Banyai, Vasile Maciu, and Ştefan Ştefanescu. Georgescu, *Politică şi istorie*, 47; Stoica, 153.

[34] For example, from the Hungarian historians, who from the early 1960s were engaged in a polemic over pre-1918's Transylvanian history with the Romanian historians.

[35] Among these, the role of Radio Free Europe, of the dozens of newpapers, journals and publishing activites of the emigre communities worldwide, and of the exiled intellectuals shall be considered. See Arch Puddinton, See also http://www.arhivaexilului.ro/ a state-sponsored digital repository completely dedicated to the subject of Romanian exiled cultural production.

young ones under their supervision). The result was a series of compromises between the different political needs of the moment and the inheritance of narrative elements from the Stalinist times, which gradually diminished book by book, year by year.[36] According to Iacob, the realization of this project (with the exception of the fifth volume on contemporary national history, which was never published) constituted a confirmation of the re-professionalization and the re-establishment of the national focus in the field of history.[37]

When Ceaușescu seized power in 1965, the propaganda apparatus continued to follow the same trajectories that had marked the last period of the previous leadership, merging national and Party history, dismantling old pro-Soviet institutions and creating new institutions for the study of history in order to provide a scholarly appearance. In 1965, those processes were already in motion and partially fulfilled.

5.2 The Party History Institute and the new canon, 1961–1964

What effects did the politics developed by the Party have on the meta-narrative? How did the Institute implement this new meta-narrative? Is the movement towards a revaluation of the national history observable in the personnel composition at the Party History Institute, in its internal and international debates, in its relationship with other historical research institutions, and in its historiographical production?

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[36] The first volume, published in 1960, covering the origins of the Romanian people, showed less intransigent attitudes towards the dogmatic theses that attributed primacy to the Slavic element, leaving out, for example, the negative judgement expressed in former publications on the Roman invasion of the Dacia region. The third volume (1964) for the first time pointed out the existence of a "Bessarabian question", a completely taboo subject during the Stalinist period. The fourth volume, published after the April Declaration in 1964, had largely abandoned dogmatic Stalinism, giving space instead to professional history (it covered the formation and consolidation of the capitalist order, 1848–1878). Georgescu, *Politică și istorie*, 50–52.

[37] 'The weight of tradition, the search for a usable past, the gradual re-integration of pre-communist historians (even those previously gaoled or legally reprimanded), and the increasing preoccupation of the Party with a formulating self-centred identitarian narrative, they all influenced and factored in the final versions of the chapters of the four-volume treatise. *Tratatul de istorie a Romîniei* ultimately confirmed the re-professionalization and the national focus within the historical front.'; Iacob, *Stalinism, Historians, and the Nation*, 299.

The movement towards a redefinition of Party historiography is visible between 1959 and 1961 in the changes in staff and organizational structure at the Party History Institute. The documents and the personal recollections clearly indicate that the leadership made certain efforts to redefine the Institute's identity, defending and defining the new political historiographical canon that distanced itself from Stalinist meta-narratives and that included elements of both national and Party history in a new canon. The leadership intervened in defending the new canon against the propagandists who still operated within the context of the old one,[38] and it appointed new scholars to develop the new canon into a scholarly standard.

From 1961, the regime mobilised its ideological apparatus in order to counter the Soviet historiographical tenets that downplayed the role of the Romanian CP in the antifascist resistance front. What consequences did this have for the Institute?

The reorganization in 1961 was a response to the attempt by Soviet historians to diminish the role of the RCP in the events of 23 August 1944. In 1959, three high representative of the RCP were received in Moscow by their Soviet counterparts, B. Ponomariov and N. Rogov. The aim of the colloquium was to express the discontent of the Romanian communists with the way in which the history of the ending of the military dictatorship in Romania was presented in the Manual of History of the CPSU.[39] This con-

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[38] Specifically Solomon Ştirbu from the Party History Institute. On 1st of December 1959, the 100th anniversary of the Union of the Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia, an event widely popularised [Ştefanescu, *Enciclopedia*, 387–388], the regime organized a conference in Alba Iulia, in the very room where the Great Union of Transylvania with Romania had been signed on 1st December 1918. Ştirbu, in disagreement with all the other historians, rejected the idea that the union between Transylvania and Romania should be seen as a positive factor. The reaction of the historians present on this occasion was severe since the general interpretation was that the Union had had a clearly positive significance. Gheorghiu-Dej demanded disciplinary measures be taken against Ştirbu, who was removed from the Party History Institute by the director Gheorghe Vasilichi and transferred to a high school. See Stoica, 92; Pavel Ţugui, *Istoria şi limba româna în vremea lui Gheorghiu-Dej. Memorile unui fost şef de secţie a CC al PMR* (Bucharest: Editura Ion Cristoiu, 1999), 154. The regime chose to endorse the new national historiographical canon, instead of the old 'Rollerist' version, and Ştirbu was quite severely punished. This episode is important, since it shows that the new canon was defended from a (minor) attack of a propagandist, while the direct intervention of the Party leadership demonstrated that deviation from that canon would not be acceptable.

[39] The Romanian delegation, composed of Emil Bodnăraş, Dumitru Coliu, and Paul Niculescu-Mizil, supported the thesis of the key role of the RCP in the events of the 23rd August 1944. They expressed their regret that the manual, which contained the notion of

frontation indicated a distancing of the Romanians from Soviet historical narratives. Romania would no longer publish whatever the Soviets asked without question, nor would the Romanians have given tacit consent when the Soviets published versions of Romanian history without previously consulting their Bucharest's peers.

In the same year, the Marxist-Leninist Institute of Moscow sent for revision the manuscripts of the *History of the USSR's Great War for the Defence of the Motherland 1941–1945*, a colossal work in six volumes, to the Party History Institute in Bucharest. At the same time, the Soviet authorities sent Professor Prokofiev, a representative of the Marxist-Leninist Institute in Moscow, to study the sources kept at the Party History Institute archive. This material was collected for the preparation of the fourth volume, focusing on 1944. Two years later, the manuscript of the final volume reached Bucharest, followed by Prokofiev, who discussed the manuscript with Popescu-Puțuri. The Romanian reaction was negative: the Soviet historians, as in the matter of the first volume, had not properly considered the role of the RCP, the mass organizations, and the armed insurrection.[40]

the Soviet army as the country's liberator, had already been sent to the printers, and insisted that in future all manuscripts from Moscow should be sent to Romanian history institutes for revision, and not directly to Editura Politică. The Soviet representatives assured them that the manual had been edited by historians, not politicians, but welcomed the request of the Romanians to improve the formula, that 'corresponds entirely to the interests of the two parties, corresponds entirely to our common cause'; *Notă despre convorbirea cu privire la Manualul de istorie a Partidului Comunist al Uniuni Sovietice*, published in its entirety in Stoica, 289–299; 298. The role of the army and of the King in the coup d'etat of the 23rd August 1944 was not considered by the Soviets or by the Romanian communists.

[40] The Soviet manuscript was criticized for having downplayed the internal factors in favour of the external ones, enhancing the role of the Red Army in liberating the country, while neglecting to attach any importance to the role of the RCP. The Soviet historians had evidently no interest in supporting the myth of 23 August 1944 and the alleged importance of the RCP in the antifascist resistance, nor in supporting the Romanians in this endeavour. Although this discussion had ended before the 22nd Congress of the CPSU, the trajectory taken by the Romanians was clear to the Soviets, who could not accept it. Prokofiev justified the decision to retain the narrative of a weak Romanian communist Party as follows: 'we are historians and we understand the interest of the Party to leave some matters aside, when they are considered politically inappropriate. And this should be done, but it must be considered by higher Party levels [on both sides]'. ANIC, CC al PCR – Secția de Propagandă și Agitație, 9/1961, *Nota din 3 mai 1961, a directorului Institutului de Istorie a Partidului, I. Popescu-Puțuri, cu privire la redactarea volumului* Istoria Marelui Război al Uniunii Sovietice pentru Apărarea Patriei*, editat de Institutul de Marxism-Leninism din URSS*, ff. 1–6; f. 2; quoted in Iacob, *Stalinism, Historians, and the Nation*, 229–230; Stoica, 143–144.

The Soviet historians would not accept the criticisms levelled in May 1961 by their Romanian counterparts, claiming that their objections were ideological and not demonstrable on the base of historical evidence. Since, in a similar manner, the Romanian representatives' criticisms of the formula used in the Manual of History of the CPSU had not received any consideration, the propaganda apparatus mobilised its defences.

The organizational structure of the Party History Institute was altered in August 1961 copying specifically the experiences of the Institute for Marxism-Leninism of the Soviet Union Communist Party and of the other Party history institutes of Eastern Europe.[41] Professional historians in national and military history were recruited: the Party History Institute benefited from 16 new researchers (and nine administrative positions).[42] The management of the Institute was altered: the choice of new staff was attributed directly to the directors, who were formally nominated by the CC. This would give the Institute leadership more freedom and fewer bureaucratic problems when recruiting, removing or promoting cadres, and increased flexibility when adapting to changes in Party policy.[43] The boundaries between the Institute sectors were now altered to fit better with national history. While the sectors had previously been organized on the basis of Party history, the structure of the new sectors matched the periodization of the workers' movement by emphasising the year 1917.[44] The new direction towards the valorisation of the army was shown by the establishment of a new sector for military history.[45]

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[41] ANIC, ISISP, A-2/1, Vol. X, *Propuneri cu privire la îmbunătățirea schemei Institutului de istorie a partidului* [*Proposals for the improvement of the Party History Institute scheme*], f. 37.

[42] Ibidem.

[43] Ibidem. While this trend was forced on the Institute, I could not retrieve information on similar decisions for other Party organizations.

[44] Chronologically, there was a division between the sectors covering the periods 1848–1917 and 1917–1944. The other Institute sectors were also organized on a new basis: contemporary research on post-1944 history, military history, mass organization and press, and international relationships. ANIC, ISISP, A-2/1, Vol. X, *Regulament* [Rule], 18-8-1961, f. 5–6.

[45] The new sector for military history was aimed at studying 'the attitude of the army during the wars in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the position of the army during the pre-revolutionary period, and the participation of Romanian military units in the struggle for the Socialist Revolution in Russia'. Ibid., f. 5.

The Institute leadership was altered with the appointment of veteran and propagandist Ion Popescu-Puțuri[46] as director, and military history journalist Gheorghe Zaharia[47] as vice-director. They seem to have been chosen

[46] Popescu-Puțuri was a veteran member of the Party, having joined in 1927. He had spent his entire youth propagandizing communism across Romania in his profession as journalist, assuming a key role in the organization of the Party [ANIC, CC al PCR, Secția Cadre, P/1010, *Ion Popescu-Puțuri*, ff. 4–5]. In contrast to the previous Institute director, he had not emigrated to the Soviet Union during the War or attended any Party school there [Ibid., V/38, Gheorghe Vasilichi, f. 1]. A dense web of conspiracy surrounds Ion Popescu-Puțuri, who during the interwar period was enmeshed in conflicts with Party secretary Ştefan Foriş [ibid., P/1010, Ion Popescu-Puțuri, ff. 5] and Lucrețiu Pătrăşcanu, [Lavinia Betea, *Lucrețiu Pătrăşcanu,* 33–34] conflicts that were the result of a power struggle within the Party and eventually ended with the gradual elimination of his adversaries. Popescu-Puțuri, in these struggles, was at first close to Pătrăşcanu, but because of their conflict he instead became close to Gheorghiu-Dej. After the Second World War, Popescu-Puțuri held several important political functions. He had a leading role in propaganda as director of the Romanian news agency from 1947 (Agerpress), and was from 1958 the Party representative on the board of the *World Marxist Review* [ANIC, CC al PCR, Secția Cadre, P/1010, Ion Popescu-Puțuri, ff. 5]. During the Hungarian revolt in 1956 he was the Romanian ambassador in Budapest, and is suspected to have played a key role in the Romanian involvement in these events due to his vast network of Comintern members at the international level. See Corneliu Mihai Lungu, Mihai Retegan: 1*956. Explozia. Percepții române, iugoslave și sovietice asupra evenimentelor din Polonia şi Ungaria* (Bucharest: Editura Univers Enciclopedic, 1996). Lucian Năstasa-Kovacs (eds.), *Maghiari din România. Mărturii documentare, 1956–1968* (Cluj: Centrul pentru Resurse și Diversitate Etnoculturală, 2003). Alexandru Purcarus, 'Comuniştii români şi revoluția maghiara din 1956 (IV)', *Ziarul Financiar*, 26-09-2008, available on http://www.zf.ro/ziarul-de-duminica/alexandru-purcarus-comunistii-roma ni-si-revolutia-maghiara-din-1956-iv-3222666. Popescu-Puțuri was appointed director of the Institute in the wake of the regime's gradual distancing from the Soviet Union (and from the previous historical canon). He obviously constituted a vital resource for the regime in his capacity as a propagandist, but also symbolically, since the new politics of the regime intended to honour the interwar veterans.

[47] During the interwar period, Gheorghe Zaharia served in the Romanian army on several occasions (including a brief period in an officers' school). Taken prisoner by the Red Army in 1942, he was re-educated in an antifascist school and attended a school for paratroopers in Kiev. Returning to Romania after the *coup d'état* in August 1944, he continued his journalistic career that he had begun during the interwar period. During the early period of the communist regime he was appointed vice-director of the army magazine *The Voice of the army* (*Glasul Armatei*), and editor-in-chief of the newspaper *Homeland Defence* (*Apărarea Patriei*). After his graduation in law in 1948, his army career was influenced by the struggles between Party factions in the early 1950s and the professionalization process in the mid-1950s. In 1951 the Political Direction of the army accused him of focusing too much on research and too little on the ideological correctness of the materials published under his supervision. In 1955 he was promoted deputy for propaganda problems by the army. His passion for research in Romanian military history was rewarded in 1961 with his promotion to vice-director of the Party History Institute with a special responsibility for problems in military history; ANIC, CC al PCR, Secția Cadre, Z/173, Gheorghe Zaharia, f. 1–2.

for two main reasons: first, their solid experience in devising propaganda, seen as an asset in the context of redefining the historiographical canon; and second, because they symbolized the components of the Party to which the new Institute chose to give special consideration when redefining its identity – and thus the emerging canon of history: the veterans (Popescu-Puțuri) and the army (Zaharia). Popescu-Puțuri and Zaharia were chosen both for their abilities in the sphere of propaganda and for their symbolic appeal.[48] They continued to lead the Institute until 1989.

After an agreement between the Institute and Leontin Sălăjan, minister of Defence, the sector for military history was staffed with military personnel who were also active in the propaganda sector of the army, at the Military Historical Museum, and at the Military Academy.[49] The research and publications of this sector were aimed at demonstrating that the Romanian army and the communist partisans were the main actors in the resistance against the military and fascist dictatorships and Nazi occupation. The contribution of the Romanian volunteers fighting against fascism and Nazism was also taken into consideration, and given increased weight. The main absentee in this description was the Red Army, which in previous historical narratives had been described as the only actor in the country's liberation. In practice, the reorganization and the appointment of new cadres made of the Institute a valuable instrument for Romania in the ideological confrontation with the Soviet Union.

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[48] Popescu-Puțuri had a clear notion of the symbolical dimension of introducing military history to the Institute under the vice-direction of a non-veteran leader. He proposed officially that since the newly founded sector for military history was staffed with military personnel, the vice-director responsible, Zaharia, who would represent 'in the future our Institute in some international meetings of historians dealing with the problems of the Second World War', should be promoted general in the reserve in order to be able to wear a uniform on such official occasions; ANIC, ISISP, A-2/1, Vol. X, *Notă suplimentară la propunerile organizatorice privitoare la Institutul de istorie a partidului 18-8-1961* [*Supplementary note to the organizational proposals regarding the Party History Institute*], ff. 42–43; f. 43.

[49] ANIC, ISISP, A-2/1, Vol. X, *Notă suplimentară*, f. 5. Popescu-Puțuri proposed that the sector be staffed by colonel Nicoale Constantin, head of the Central Military Museum; Minea Stan, researcher in history at the Military Historical Museum; Eugen Bantea, head of Editura Militara publishing house; lieutenant colonel Tudor Nicolae, vice-head of the history of military (sic) at the Military Academy; major Aurel Petri, vice-head of the scientific research sector of the Military Academy; captain Ilie Petre, lecturer at the propaganda sector of the army [Ibidem]. Only Aurel Petri and Constantin Nicolae would effectively become part of the sector, together with Dumitru Tuțu; see T. Georgescu, *Tot un fel de istorie*, 265.

The research cadres at the Institute continued to be a mixture of professional historians and Party activists devoted to the research of Party history. A preponderance of these cadres had a scholarly education in history with a particular emphasis on the workers' movement.[50] In the next sub-chapter, the efforts of these scholars are placed in the general context of the regime's tactics to enhance its legitimacy while not infringing politically on the unity of communism.

5.3 Joint efforts of the Academy and the Party History Institute in defining the new canon: the Academy at the Frontline

In the two following sections I intend to analyse the joint effort of the Romanian Academy and the Party History Institute in defining the new canon and countering the Soviet historiographical theses. How did the Romanian regime use the state and Party institutions for historical research to counter the meta-narratives produced by the Soviet Academy of Science? What role did the Party History Institute have, and how should its position in respect to the Romanian Academy be characterised?

The divergences between Soviet and Romanian historians on the role of the RCP during the War became more clearly defined in the early 1960s, spreading from the Party level to the academic level. In 1963, the History Institute of the Soviet Union Academy of Sciences sent a manuscript to the Romanian Academy of a study entitled *The Modern and Contemporary History of Romania. A Short Study*. The manuscript was criticized by both the Party History Institute and the Academy for consistently downplaying the internal factors of Romania's development, diminishing the role of the

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[50] Five persons holding doctorates in history were employed after 1958: Maria Covaci (from 1961), devoted to the history of antifascist resistance; Augustin Deac, from 1958 head of the sector for mass organizations; Florea Dragne, from 1960 the main scientific researcher; Ion Oprea, the main scientific researcher on the interwar period, from 1959; and, from 1959, Alexandru Nicolae Popescu, expert on the interwar workers' movement. The Institute also employed comrades with an education in history (but not holding doctorates): Nichita Paraschiva, head of the contemporary history sector, from 1958; Nicolae Constantin, the main scientific researcher in military history; and Angara Nyri, scientific researcher in the international relationships sector. Two were activists: Petre Ilie, employed at the military history sector, and Olimpiu Matichescu, researcher at the mass organization sector. See Ştefanescu, *Enciclopedia*, cit.

local workers' movement and the Communist Party, and exaggerating the role of activists of Russian origin. It was also claimed that the narrative exaggerated the role of Russian historical events as determinants for the development of Romania.[51] The reviewers of both the Party History Institute and the Academy concluded that the Soviet manuscript did not recognize that the history of Romania was the result of a process merging national and socially progressive factors.

When defining a new cultural strategy supporting the regime's political distancing from the Soviet Union, the state and Party cultural institutions became vital instruments used by the regime to highlight or downplay the cultural elements of this redefinition. As seen in the three cases presented in the previous section, the spokespersons of the new canon were mainly Party figures: in 1959, the high-level propagandists protested against the role assigned to Romania by the history manual of the CPSU, while in 1961, the director of the Party History Institute refused to accept the narrative on Romania developed in the *History of the Soviet Union* edited by the Marxist-Leninist Institute in Moscow. In 1963, a short history of modern and contemporary Romania edited by the Soviet Academy of Sciences was criticized by the Academy historians, supported by colleagues at the Party History Institute. In this case, the substantial cultural capital of the Soviet Union and Romanian Academies made it inappropriate for the high-level propagandists and the Party History Institute to intervene directly. The Institute did not possess enough academic prestige to answer the Soviet Academy, which had requested a review of the work from the Romanian Academy. At the same time, the Party History Institute had to push for the acceptance of the interpretation of history endorsed by the Party. As a

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[51] The Soviet manuscript allegedly showed a lack of understanding for 'the unitary character of the development of the historical process on the territory of our homeland'. The economic, political, and cultural links between Transylvania and Romania were not developed in the Soviet manuscript. Regarding the union of 1918, 'the [manuscript] authors did not stress the historical necessity and the legitimacy of the union of Transylvania with Romania; they do not recognize that the union constituted a correct and progressive act'. As a third point of criticism, the Romanian reviewers complained about the modality in which the events of August 1944 were presented; that the events were not described in their full 'political and military importance'. ANIC, ISISP, A-13/19, Vol. I, *Referat prinvind lucrarea Studii asupra istoriei moderna și contemporane a Romîniei (Lucrare în manuscris elaborată de Academia de Științe a URSS)* [*Review of the work Studies on the modern and contemporary history of Romania (Manuscript work edited by the Academy of Sciences of the Soviet Union)*], f. 90.

consequence, the Romanian Academy became the main protagonist in this protest against the Soviet narrative on Romania.

The cultural strategy organized by the Romanian political leadership, I would argue, took two different lines: the political one, supported actively by the Party History Institute and by the other Party cultural institutions; and the scholarly one developed by the Academy. A, example of this cultural strategy concerned the vicissitudes of Karl Marx's *Notes on the Romanians*, a work that had primary historiographical relevance for the political conflict with Soviet Union, and is also a good example of the double approach with which the regime conducted the political conflict with the Soviet Union using cultural means.

In 1957, Polish historian Stanislaw Schwann, professor at the University of Szczecin, discovered at the Marx-Engels archive of the International Institute for Social History in Amsterdam an unedited manuscript by Karl Marx containing his views on the history of Romania and its role in the international context of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Having studied in Romania, Schwann informed the Party History Institute of the manuscript's existence in the summer of 1957, and also sent some photocopies.[52] Receiving no reply from the Institute, he communicated his perplexity to Petre Lucaci, a member of the Propaganda Section who had been sent to Poland for a cultural exchange in 1957–58. The propaganda apparatus in turn communicated with Party leader Gheorghiu-Dej about the existence of the Marx manuscript. According to Paul Niculescu-Mizil, Gheorghiu-Dej wanted to know the exact details of the matter. Dej evidently recommended prudence when examining the problem, asking Stanislaw Schwann to be investigated in order to avoid a possible trap. The fact that Schwann stated that he had contacted the Party History Institute could have been an attempt to involve the Party in an obscure power game. In this unclear situation, Dej reacted resolutely: 'We decide who we send to Am-

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[52] No traces have been found in the Institute archive of the copies supposedly sent from Schwann to the Party History Institute in 1957. Pavel Țugui, one of the main ideologists of the national-communist canon, considers in his recollections that the director at that time, Mihai Roller, must have hidden them (P. Țugui, cit, 183). Paul Niculecu-Mizil was informed only after 1989 about the existence of those copies at the Party History Institute. See Paul Niculescu-Mizil, *O istoria trăită* (Bucharest: Editura Enciclopedică, 1997), 260–261.

sterdam, not by Party line, but by a scholarly line. A trusted man, but not a declared political militant'.[53]

The "scholarly line" consisted of giving a green light to contacts between Andrei Oțetea, a Marxist and highly esteemed historian of the Academy History Institute, and Schwann. However, the Party line was still very much present, directing and financing the initial research from behind the scenes. Schwann, in 1959, wrote to Nicolae Goldberger, vice-director of the Party History Institute, asking urgently that the Party History Institute communicate with the Romanian ambassador in Poland, asking him to write to the Polish Ministry of Higher Education that the Party History Institute was ready to cover the costs of his three-week stay in Amsterdam.[54] Evidently, Schwann received the approval of the Romanian leadership, and he was supported by funds allocated for the Party History Institute.

Oțetea and Schwann travelled to Amsterdam at the beginning of 1960 where they copied the 84 handwritten pages by Marx produced between 1853 and 1860. In this manuscript, Marx sympathized with the cause of the Romanian people to establish a unitary state, and described tsarist Russia as the main actor contributing to the backwardness of the Romanian lands. In several passages, the role of Russia was portrayed as clearly negative, and many parallels to current times could be established by modern readers: the Ottoman Empire's secession of Bessarabia to Russia was considered a violation of international principles, while the military occupation of 1828-1829 was described by Marx as marked by violent excesses perpetrated by Russians on the Romanian population. Moreover, the view of Russians as "liberators" when they invaded the Romanian kingdom to quell the 1848 Revolution was shattered by Marx, who saw the events in 1848 in Romania as an anti-Russian revolution. Furthermore, Marx stated that Transylvanian population was one-third Hungarian nobles, who oppressed the remaining two-thirds, who were Romanian serfs. This was a valuable point for the Romanians, who could use this argument to show the class struggle dimension of the Transylvanian conflict.[55]

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[53] 'Să stabilim pe cine trimitem la Amsterdam, nu pe linie de partid, ci pe linie științifică. Un om de nădejde, dar nu militant politic declarat'; quoted in Niculescu-Mizil, *O istoria trăită*, 261.

[54] ANIC, ISISP, A-16/5, f. 125–127, *Letter from Stanislaw Schwann to the Party History Institute, 11-8-1959.*

[55] Karl Marx, *Însemnări despre români (manuscrise inedite)* (Bucharest, Editura Academia RPR, 1964). Oțetea and Schwann contracted the copying of the Marx manuscript with the Institute in Amsterdam, and promised that the copies could not be

In April 1960, Schwann travelled to Romania to discuss with the Party History Institute the publication of the Marx manuscript. Despite the fact that the Institute had financed Schwann's research, at a meeting held at the Party History Institute it was decided that the intellectual property of the publication belonged to Oțetea and Schwann,[56] who were also entrusted to form a work collective for the editing of the manuscript. It was also decided that the whole project should remain secret, and that the details of the publication would be decided at a later stage.

The leadership of the Party History Institute were probably somewhat uncomfortable about this decision, and it is not unlikely that some of its high-ranked members were entirely opposed to the project. It is hardly a coincidence that at the very same time, in 1960, Niculescu-Mizil suggested to Gheorghiu-Dej to give the Party History Institute the privilege of re-publishing the letter addressed by Friedrich Engels to Romanian Social-Democrat Ion Nădejde, director of the *Contemporanul* review, sent on 4 January 1888. This short letter was along the same lines as Marx's manuscript:[57] Engels made reference to Russia's 'double theft of Bessarabia'[58], but the political weight of the letter was naturally limited - it was only two pages long, and had already been published in both 1888 and 1945.[59] The Party History Institute was authorized to include Engels's letter in the first volume of *Workers' and Socialist Press in Romania*, probably as a kind of compensation for losing the rights to Marx's manuscript. This work in seven volumes was edited by the Party History Institute by Popescu-Puțuri, Nicolae Goldberger, Augustin Deac, and Ion Felea.[60]

Karl Marx's manuscript was edited in total secrecy between 1961 and 1964. The volume was at first edited by Oțetea and Schwann, together with a collective from the Academy's History Institute[61] comprising Gheorghe

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spread to other countries, nor be published until the Dutch institute had concluded an exchange of photocopies with the Soviet Union. ANIC, CC al PCR, Secția Propagandă și Agitație, 13/1960, *Informație 26-4-1960*, f. 1; published in Stoica, 300–301.

[56] Ibid., f. 2 (301).

[57] Ibid., 275–276.

[58] Quoted in Niculescu-Mizil, *O istoria trăită*, 276.

[59] Ibid., 277.

[60] Popescu-Puțuri, Nicolae Goldberger, Augustin Deac, and Ion Felea (eds.), *Presa muncitorească și socialistă din România*, Editura Politică, Bucharest: Vol. I (part 1), 1964; vol. I (part 2), 1964; vol. II (part 1), 1966.

[61] Iacob, 'Karl Marx și stalinismul național: Istorie scurta a "Însemnarilor despre români"', *Contributors.ro*, available on http://www.contributors.ro/politica-doctrine/

Zane and Cornelia Bodea.[62] It was then re-edited for internal use only in two more editions with different titles and re-edited contents.[63] At the end of 1964, the fourth and definitive version of Karl Marx's *Însemnari despre români* and the first volume of *Presa muncitorească şi socialist din România*[64] were finally published and distributed. The collection of documents was published by Editura Politică, while the Marx manuscript, printed in the record number of 20 500 copies, obtained the privilege of appearing in the Academy's book series. The book by Marx was too politically relevant to be edited by the Party History Institute and published by Editura Politică, the Party publishing house where all the other writings by Marx had been previously published, despite the fact that the Institute had financed Schwann's field-work in Amsterdam. The regime obviously had to distance itself from the publication, making it appear as a solidly scholarly work based on a previously unknown text by Marx and not a product of current political expediency, as in fact it was. The leadership clearly strove to maximize its political impact and to enhance the traditional Romanian Russophobia. At the same time, the use of Marx's text conferred legitimacy to the Romanian anti-Soviet stances of recent years. Marx's cultural capital was the most powerful (cultural) weapon the regime could utilize, and this book was able to show to the world that the Romanian regime was not moving away from socialism, but was instead developing Marxist ideology in the vein of its forefather.

karl-marx-si-stalinismul-national-istorie-scurta-a-%E2%80%9Einsemnarilor-despre-romani%E2%80%9D/

[62] Niculescu-Mizil, *O istoria trăită*, 263.

[63] The volume, in its separate editions, appeared as follows: in 1961, it was entitled *Karl Marx despre România (manuscrise)* [*Karl Marx on Romania (manuscripts)*]. No author was named, but reference was made to Stanislaw Schwann and the International Institute in Amsterdam. In 1962, the title was changed to *Karl Marx – Însemnări pe marginea unor lucrări privitoare la istoria României (manuscrise)* [*Karl Marx – Notes on some works on the history of Romania (manuscripts)*]. The introduction was changed (the term "Bessarabia" was not mentioned) and the names of Oţetea and Schwann appeared as editors. In 1963, the definitive title was formulated, and the publishing house decided. Niculescu-Mizil, *O istoria trăită*, 263–266.

[64] Ion Popescu-Puţuri et al. (eds.), *Presa muncitorească şi socialist din România, 1865–1900* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1964).

5.4 1964 as a turning point at the Institute?

During the period 1961–63, the traditional distinction between Party and non-Party cultural institutions offered stable positions for the activists and the historians – but what happened in the Institute after the declaration of independence from Soviet domination?

When, previously, political tactics did not include giving political responsibilities for the history discipline to the scholarly institutions, the activists probably felt quite safe in their positions. But at the time of the declaration of April, in 1964, many new young historians were employed at the Institute, and the divide between them and the propagandists was becoming evident in terms of cultural capital and prestige.

The new system of values favoured the young historians coming from Bucharest University, where the official manual by Roller was still during the 1950s used together with many extracts of interwar historians' writings.[65] They were part of the generation that had learned how to live according to the common motto 'at school you have to repeat the lesson as the teacher tells you, but you must also know how history happened in reality'.[66] Obviously, the divide between them and the propagandists constituted an abyss.[67] Their cultural capital was derived from knowledge, and their prestige depended on the new system of values that the regime had chosen when moving away from Soviet-type Stalinism.

The old 'dogmatic' propagandists, in the new system of values, were simply out of place – their source of authority was still the Party, but in the eyes of the historians they were uneducated activists with no real knowledge and therefore no prestige. For the propagandists, this was a dangerous situation since their access to resources could have suddenly been brought to an end. The April Declaration was 'a real cold shower'[68] for old dogmatists like Nicolae Goldberger, Ştefan Voicu, Valter Roman, and Vasile

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[65] Georgescu, *Tot un fel de istorie*, cit.; Stan, *Istorie şi politică*, cit.;

[66] Interview by the author with Ion Bulei, 12th February 2013.

[67] Florian Tănăsescu began his work at the Institute at the end of 1964, together with other colleagues from the University. 'Both me and my colleagues from the faculty […] were surprised by the "atmosphere" of the Institute, that seemed to us "tensioned", not so much by the width of the debates on the Declaration [of April] and of other documents of the RCP, but much more so by the severe trait of some considerations concerning the Soviet Union, the Comecon, the Warsaw Treaty, the Valev Plan, and so on'. Interview with Florian Tănăsescu, via e-mail, 26th May 2014.

[68] Gheorghe I. Ioniţă, *O viaţă, un destin. Istorie ştiute şi neştiute* (Bucharest: Cartea Universitară, 2007)*,* 64.

Liveanu, but they kept their positions, even if fearing the worst. Florian Tănăsescu, a young historian enrolled at the Institute at that time, maintains that in the consequent polarization of positions within the Institute between dogmatists and reformists, the latter gathered around Titu Georgescu. Some of them started to understand that the divide between them and the professional historians could be bridged by increased networking.[69] These tensions were dissolved only in 1966, when the Institute implemented reforms to achieve better adherence to the Party's new cultural strategy, and consequently forced the old dogmatists to adhere to it.[70]

But the attempts to claim cultural capital, a common characteristic of the memories and memoirs of the historians enrolled at the Institute in the 1960s, did not represent any real change in the composition in the Institute's ranks. Despite the alleged "fears among the activists" recorded by the historians in their memoirs, the staff composition at the Institute was actually not altered. Rather, the main political impact was connected to the appointment of young graduate historians in the period 1964–1970, under the supervision of Titu Georgescu. In all probability, these memoirs try to substantiate that, during the regime, these historians possessed a special cultural capital, creating in retrospect a dichotomy between the historians as defenders of scholarship and national values, versus the uneducated "pro-Stalinist" activists. But this account is essentially fictive: they were all collaborating on the same political project.

Nevertheless, it is the agency of political power that makes the difference here: the leadership endorsed the educated historians since it was in need of their skills, hoping to replace the old-fashioned and unskilled propagandists and veterans with fresh forces able to produce a valuable national-communist canon and to reproduce it scholarly. Nevertheless, the leadership could not upset the power structure inside the Party – the veterans and the propagandists continued to be important for the legitimation of the leadership inside the Party for a long time.

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[69] Georgescu noted in his memoirs that after the April Declaration, 'at the Institute some of us exchanged smiles without saying anything, we observed some of the others, we looked at each other waiting to see what we had to do'; Georgescu, *Tot un fel de istorie*, 336.

[70] Interview with Florian Tănăsescu, via e-mail, 26th May 2014.

5.5 Conclusions

The Romanian de-Stalinization impacted on the Party structures dedicated to historical research and ultimately on the historical narratives. The reaction to the de-Stalinization[71] process created after 1958 'a refusal of the ideological ecumenism of Moscow'[72] and occasioned a convergence of interests and views between the Party-led institutions and the historians of the Academy, who became instruments of the regime.[73] The Party allowed the nation to return to the centre of the history-writing discursive field,[74] but under Party guidance and for Party gain, hardly for renewing historiography for its own sake. This is evident from the vicissitudes of the *Notes to the Romanians* and the 'scholarly road' chosen for the publication of this work under the banner of the Academy.

Between 1961 and 1964, the regime gave authority to the historians and the non-Party institutions, but without previous declarations of intents. Once the delegation of the Institute was engaged in an open conflict with their Soviet counterparts, it was clear that the divergences on historical controversies could not be expressed by Romanian politicians. The unity of world communism was at stake, and a political conflict would have been inconsistent in the light of the official declaration of solidarity with and understanding for the Soviet Union in their conflict with the China. The chosen road had to be different: the scholarly one.

Therefore, this process is better understood by looking at the causes of the April Declaration, rather than at its 'consequences',[75] since the redefinition of sovereignty was not limited to a reassertion of values into the cultural discourse. The 'paradigm shift' from Stalinism to national-communism[76] was merely a decision of the sovereign power to redefine its own modality of command: from the Baconian "power as the source of know-

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[71] The expression is used by Georges Haupt, 'La genèse du conflit soviéto-roumain', *Revue francaise de science politique* XVIII (4/1968), 669–684.

[72] Mihalache, 142.

[73] Stoica, 135–164: 'the new official version of national history and the history of the Party […] carries notions like national identity, patriotism, fight for independence, national interest' (141); Iacob concluded: 'the fact that on *Notes* have worked historians of an Academy's institute and not of the Party History Institute […] indicates a communion of interests between professional historians […] and the Party': see Iacob, 'Karl Marx şi stalinismul national', cit.

[74] Claim supported by Verdery, *National Ideology under Socialism*, cit.

[75] Verdery, *National Ideology*, 105.

[76] Iacob, *Stalin, the Historians*, cit.

ledge" and guarantee of Marxism-Leninism, to a political project intended to safeguard sovereign power, which, with the help of scholarly knowledge, was the guarantee of the orthodoxy of the Party and the nation.

The qualitative change in the relationship between power and historiography is evident, but limited to the return of scholarship's cultural capital. Sovereign power was not involved in this change: the course taken in 1961–64 was still determined by political power, which co-opted the historians and restored their cultural capital for its own needs. Once again, as at the dawn of the modern era, political power endorsed the creation of disciplines with its own system of values and instruments (the standards).

But the dichotomy autonomy/heteronomy, characteristic of the modern era, has a very peculiar dynamic in this case. For a few brief years, at the beginning of the sixties, the regime listened very carefully to the scholarly teachings of the historians. The higher propagandists were reading the drafts of national history written by historians who were progressively told not to worry, and to write with a certain degree of autonomy – more correctly, they were asked to write with a minor degree of heteronomy in the system of values endorsed by the Party. Certain elements of those narratives were usable since they did not put sovereignty at risk. Therefore, the national-communist canon that would be codified in Party documents few years later portrays an edited collage of those acceptable semi-autonomous teachings, while the unacceptable ones were simply rejected or manipulated. The canon of the years 1964–66 demonstrates that the aim of the Party after 1961 was to find a narrative that could bring legitimacy, not the rediscovery of scholarship *per se*.

Despite having its dignity restored as an autonomous discipline in 1961-1964, scholarship was used as propaganda and continued to endorse the view of the Party as the common good, since any other thesis on the matter would simply not have been condonable by the Party. The historians stayed away from any potentially dangerous topic. No historian "saved" national ideology or scholarship in this cooperation – national ideology, together with scholarly standards, were manipulated by the Party to better serve the political project, with the historians as active collaborators.

Together with this gradual process of reaffirming the cultural authority of the scholars and the non-Party academic institutions, several measures were taken to modernise the Institute. It was provided with skilful propagandists and historians, and its range was expanded to include matters of military and nineteenth century history. However, Party control remained firm. This renewal had a certain impact on the Institute: a veteran

(Popescu-Puțuri) and a representative of the army (Zaharia) were chosen as leaders of the Institute in order to show that these components of the Romanian power structure were visibly represented, and also that they supported the regime and its rhetorical canon. Furthermore, the Institute's reorganization took into consideration the exigencies of the new canon and aimed at optimizing material and human resources at all levels: the restructuring of the Party History Institute, its politically desired but also problematic alliance with the Romanian Academy in some joint projects under the supervision of the Party leadership, and, finally, its historiographical production.

At the same time, the contextual analysis of the archival sources and previous literature casts doubt on the claim of the Institute historians that the regime recognised scholarly autonomy. As shown in the case of Marx's *Notes*, the empowering of the scholars was enacted by the regime in collaboration with the Institute. Consequently, the regime did not empower the historians in their autonomy, but rather recognized their cultural authority and took political advantage of it. As will be clarified in the following chapters, this perceived autonomy had certain boundaries. As a consequence, the historians, from an initially marginal position, became active participants in the regime's plans for a new historiography, even entering the Party History Institute.

On the other hand, it is not possible to make a clear distinction, within this framework, between Party and non-Party historians. The example of Benedetto Croce, who exhorted the intellectuals to swear the Oath of Fascist Intellectuals in order to fight fascism from within, would be difficult to apply in the case of this regime: would it be applicable only to the historians who stayed outside the Institute and continued to exercise their profession? The Institute's historians could claim the opposite, and with some reason. In contrast to Italian fascism, the RWP did not impose an open subscription to its tenets; on the contrary, it offered certain advantages and material resources to those who agreed to compromise and actively participate in the cultural politics as historians, even to those who were not Party members.

From 1964, Romania was politically autonomous, under the guidance of a party that never really de-Stalinized. The leadership changed the Party discourse by providing authority to scholarly standards and by the clever use of political and scholarly means in specific situations. The professional historians could take part in this scholarly-political project only if they refrained from contesting the Party's overriding cultural authority (power as the source of truth), which would have meant an attack on its sovereignty. In

exchange, history, being scholarly heteronomous, obtained substantial resources from the regime, since those in power could benefit from the legitimacy provided by the scholarly research in history. Therefore, from 1961, political power and scholarship were again, for the first time since 1948, in a symbiotic relationship, providing essential resources to each other.[77]

Political power, in its quest to avoid being perceived as mere *potestas*, ceased formally to impose its *imperium* on scholarship, and instead acknowledged scholarship and its standards, seeking to gain legitimacy at both domestic and international levels. The systemic changes implemented by Gheorghiu-Dej in the Party discourse and the new modality of knowledge production would have been capitalized by Ceaușescu, who succeeded him in 1965. Willing to achieve domestic and international legitimacy, without losing sovereignty, Ceaușescu misunderstood the essentially modern functioning of the system he had inherited, and constituted since 1965 the bases of the stagnation of the regime in the seventies and the eighties.

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[77] Feichtinger, 61.

PART THREE
Party History-Writing
under the Ceauşescu Regime

Cannibalizing national history:
the 'guided liberalization' and the transformation
of the Party History Institute into the Institute for
Socio-Political and Historical Studies, 1965–1968

The aim of this chapter is to analyse the relationship between political power and history-writing in the transition from Gheorghiu-Dej's regime to the first years of leadership of his successor, Nicolae Ceauşescu. Previous research has underlined the key role of Ceauşescu in reforming and regimenting cultural politics, and the regime's need to implement the new national-communist canon, but has not provided any analysis of the consequences of this change for ISISP and its historiography. Recent scholarship has referred to the first years of the Ceauşescu regime as a time of 'relative liberalization',[1] of 'altered and conjunctival liberalism',[2] and of 'controlled liberalism'.[3] Nevertheless, the explanations given by previous research on the turn of the regime to a "new dark age" in the late sixties is not easily understandable by the focus on the "liberalizing" aspects of the mid-sixties. Rather, I claim, the political decisions taken in this period were a direct pre-announcement of the new dark age to come. Just a few years were sufficient for the new leadership to manipulate the previously endorsed general strategy and the mechanisms of its cultural politics. The exigencies of legitimation by Ceauşescu inside the Party had been the driving force of this

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[1] Cioroianu, *Pe umerii lui Marx*, 489 quoted in Vasile, *Viața intelectuală şi artistică în primul deceniu*, cit., 205 n22).

[2] Pavel Câmpeanu, *Ceauşescu. Anii numărătorii inverse* (Iaşi: Polirom, 2002), 258, quoted in Vasile, *Viața intelectuală şi artistică în primul deceniu*, cit., 205, n22.

[3] Anneli Ute Gabanyi, *Literatura şi politica în România dupa 1945* (Bucharest, Fundația Culturala Române, 2001) quoted in Vasile, *Viața intelectuală şi artistică în primul deceniu*, cit., 205 n22.

change. Its consequences for the cultural field in general and in history-writing in particular are here analysed with focus on the allocation of resources to history-writing institutions.

6.1 Ceauşescu, or the capitalization of the strategy of Gheorghiu-Dej

What actually led to the reform of the Romanian cultural politics in the mid-1960s? What role did Ceauşescu have in it? In March 1965, Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej died a natural death and the question of political succession opened up. The death of Gheorghiu-Dej did not mean his political death,[4] since his political course during the past eight years had been embedded in the state and Party organizational structure, and in the propaganda discourse.[5] Having started his career as an uninspiring leader, with terror, repression, machination, and alliances with the veterans and the army, Gheorghiu-Dej succeeded in forging the Romanian regime into an obedient apparatus, a very efficient Stalinist-state machine.

After the death of Gheorghiu-Dej, few options were available for Romania. At the 9th Party congress in July 1965, the choice between a reformer, Ion Gheorghe Maurer, and the Party hard-line, supported by Nicolae Ceauşescu[6] and his loyal allies,[7] was mediated by the mechanism of

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[4] Adrian Coiroianu, *Pe umerii lui Marx*, 386.

[5] Ibid., 393–394.

[6] Nicolae Ceauşescu was born in 1918 into a poor peasant family in the small village of Scorniceşti, in Oltenia, Ceauşescu became a member of the RCP in 1934. In the interwar period he was arrested seven times, and soon became familiar with the political prisoners' rows in the gaols of Doftana, Jilava, and Târgu-Jiu. It was in Târgu-Jiu that Ceauşescu shared a cell with Gheorghiu-Dej, who had become famous, at that time, for his participation in the 1933 railway strike in the Bucharest city quarter of Griviţa. Gheorghiu-Dej politically adopted Ceauşescu, who benefited from this friendship when, in 1945, the new Party secretary appointed him head of the Communist Youth (*Uniunea Tineretului Comunişti*) and consequently member of the CC. In the immediate aftermath of the Second World War he accumulated political experience and responsibilities: in 1946 he became a deputy to the National Assembly; in 1948, he became secretary to the minister of agriculture and directly responsible for the plans of collectivization; in 1950, he became secretary of the military and chief of the political section of the army; in 1953, he became member of the Political Bureau of the Party [F. Dobre, *Membri CC al PCR. Dicţionar,* 8] and responsible for the Party cadres; while, finally, in 1954, he became secretary of the CC and adjunct member of the Political Bureau. He was loyal to the leader but he kept away from power struggles [Vlad Georgescu, *The Romanians. A History*, (Columbus: Ohio state University Press, 1991), 249–251; Adam Burakowski,

the "collective leadership" of the Party. But Nicolae Ceauşescu soon managed to impose himself as the single and unquestioned leader.

Within two years he succeeded in centring decisive power in his own hands, exculpating himself and the regime for the repressions taken place under Gheorghiu-Dej, and ascribing the responsibility of what had happened before his leadership firmly to Gheorghiu-Dej and his associates. By 1968 he was in full control of the domestic situation, having abjured his political father-figure while deftly exploiting his heritage and gradually eliminating his enemies.[8]

But the way in which Ceauşescu was presented to the national and international audiences was very different. From the very beginning of his regime, he wanted to present himself as a reasonable, pragmatic, and open-

Dictatura lui Nicolae Ceauşescu (1965–1989). Geniul Carpaţilor, (Iaşi: Polirom, 2011), 60–61; Verdery, *National Ideology under Socialism: Identity and Cultural Politics In Ceauşescu's Romania*, 116]. He has been described as 'obedient, fanatic, narrow-minded, […] aggressive' [Tismăneanu, 'Cartea stalinismului naţional', cit.] and arrogant [Pavel Câmpeanu, *Ceauşescu*, 24]. The Party bosses in 1965 believed that he would be easily controllable, but they all undervalued the possible consequences of his careerism and his lust for power [Pierre du Bois, *Ceauşescu la putere. Anchetă asupra unei ascensiunii politice* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2008), 56].
[7] The allies of Ceauşescu were Ilie Verdeţ, former chief of the Organizational Section, Paul Niculescu-Mizil, chief of the Propaganda and Agitation Section, and Virgil Trofin, who had the Organizational and Cadre Section under his control. Vladimir Tismăneanu, 'Cartea stalinismului naţional: Declaraţia PMR din aprilie 1964', *Contributors.ro*, 25th April 2014, available on http://www.contributors.ro/global-europa/carta-stalinismului-national-declaratia-pmr-din-aprilie-1964/
[8] Cioroianu, 398. His potential rivals were other Party bosses from the Dej era: Chivu Stoica, president of the State Council, and the three adjunct prime ministers, Gheorghe Apostol, Emil Bodnaraş and Alexandru Draghici. In a few moves, Ceauşescu succeeded in limiting their power, and within two years his enemies no longer constituted a problem: Leontin Sălăjan, minister of Defence, died during a simple appendicitis operation in 1966; Chivu Stoica committed suicide in 1967; Apostol and Draghici were dismissed from their positions and given considerably fewer responsibilities. Alexandru Draghici was confronted indirectly by a commission investigating the responsibility for the death of Lucreţiu Pătrăşcanu. This commission, composed of activists loyal to Ceauşescu (Gheorghe Stoica, Vasile Patilineţ, Nicolae Guina and Ion Popescu-Puţuri), concluded that the persons mainly responsible for the previous policies were Gheorghiu-Dej, Iosif Chişinevschi, and Alexandru Draghici. Draghici was subsequently removed from all political functions. While these and many higher officials close to Gheorghiu-Dej resigned from their positions in 1968 'due to health reasons' (ibid., 399–400), two other high-level activists, Bodnăraş and Apostol, were accused of not resisting Dej's policies. In addition, Ceauşescu had a huge number of supporters ready to support him on every occasion, so that, as a reward, they obtained the positions occupied until then by men who gravitated around other members of the Political Bureau.

minded leader.[9] Unlike his predecessor, he wanted to participate directly in the formulation of his speeches, with the help of expert ideologues like Niculescu-Mizil[10] and Dumitru Popescu,[11] who were his most powerful supporters. At the 9th Congress of the Party, Ceauşescu stressed the continuity of an autonomous nucleus of the Party from the interwar period, while failing to mention the most relevant intra-Party conflicts of the past. But he also stressed that a new era was beginning for the Party.[12]

The political capital built by the strategy of Gheorghiu-Dej was exploited during the first years of the new regime with a few symbolical but highly relevant choices in terms of popular legitimacy, among these the changing of the official names of the country and the Party,[13] the reintroduction of the letter â,[14] and the adoption of a new Constitution. The narrative of the nation found its basis in the distancing from the Soviet Union through the re-establishment of the principle of the class struggle. The canon, 'the flourishing of the nation and the socialist state'[15] was built accordingly and applied to the understanding of Romania's history, whose interpretative criteria (the principles of independence, equal rights and non-interference in the internal affairs of the other communist parties) were maintained from the previous epoch,[16] but the domestic audience had at that time an impression of change, of political relaxation.

[9] Tismăneanu, *Stalinism for All Seasons*, 193.
[10] Nicolescu-Mizil maintains in his memoirs that there was 'no alternative' to Ceauşescu, who 'came to power as an uncontended leader'. Paul Niculescu-Mizil, *O istorie trăită. Memorii, vol. II: Bucureştii, Moscova, Praga, Bologna* (Bucharest: Editura Democraţia, 2003), 14.
[11] Ibid., 195.
[12] Partidul Comunist Român, *Congresul al IX lea al PCR* (Bucharest, Editura Politică, 1969), 66–67.
[13] Just before the 9th Congress, a Central Committee plenum led by Ceauşescu changed the name of the Party from the Romanian Workers' Party to the Romanian Communist Party (*Partidul Comunist Român*); ibid., 194. The official name of the country was then changed from *Republica Populară Romîna* to *Republica Socialista România*; Partidul Comunist Român, *Congresul al IX lea al PCR* (Bucharest, Editura Politică, 1965), 66.
[14] In orthography the letter *â* for the word 'Romania' (*România*), and its derived nouns and adjectives, was reintroduced in 1964 after its previous elimination from the Romanian alphabet in 1954 in the attempt to slavicize the Romanian language with the introduction of the letter *î*.
[15] Partidul Comunist Român, *Congresul al IX lea al PCR*, 66–67.
[16] Ibid., 84–86; 97–104.

The first years that followed after the congress were, in many aspects, characterised by a 'guided liberalization',[17] meaning an ephemeral ideological relaxation. According to Tismăneanu, 'there was a kernel of truth in the idea that this congress had changed important elements in the social, economic, and cultural life in Romania'.[18] Deftly mixing high-level strategic goals with intra-Party tactics, Ceaușescu started a process of rehabilitation of some of the former politically excluded – two examples were Miron Constantinescu and Constantin Doncea.[19] In comparison to the previous era, where only one history textbook was legal, this was a step towards diversity.

Probably, the power struggle within the leadership, and the consequent networking for loyalty and support within the Party, had an important role when forming the new cultural politics. Ceaușescu needed allies among the higher activists and scholars. The next two sub-chapters show what the Party and non-Party historians requested from the new leadership and what the latter could actually offer.

6.2 The 'guided liberalization' in the Party cultural politics and the historical revisionism endorsed by the Party leadership, 1964–1966

Previous historiography has considered the years 1964–1966 as the conclusive phase of the process of co-option and control of the professional historians by the Party, a process whereby the historians internalized Marxism-Leninism and positioned themselves in the system of planned

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[17] Formulation used by Cristian Vasile, *Viața intelectuală și artistică în primul deceniu al regimului Ceaușescu 1965–1974* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2015), 22, originally used by Michael Shafir, 'Political Culture, Intellectual Dissent, and Intellectual Consent: The Case of Romania', *Orbis. A Journal of World Affairs*, 27 (2/1983), 412. The expression is quoted also in Alina Pavelescu, *Funcția politică a intelectualului în comunism*, in *P.C.R. și intelectualii în primii ani ai regimului Ceaușescu (1965–1972)*, eds. Alina Pavelescu, Laura Dumitru (Bucharest: Arhivele Naționale ale României, 2007), V.

[18] Tismăneanu, *Stalinism for All Seasons*, 197. At the societal level, many political prisoners were free to return home, even if a great number remained imprisoned or under close surveillance by the Securitate. At the cultural level, the import of Western products like books and films was allowed with fewer restrictions than in the previous years. At individual level, travelling abroad became possible. The ideological relaxation allowed the presence of three different history textbooks for schools at the end of the 1960s.

[19] Cioroianu, *Pe umerii lui Marx*, 399.

scholarly production while at the same time experiencing a gradual rehabilitation of their professional tradition.[20] However, analysing the official Party documents on the relationship with the intellectuals, some important details emerge about the importance of Ceaușescu personally in the redirection of cultural politics towards national ideology, and about the reaction of the intellectuals.

At the beginning of the Ceaușescu era, the new course led the intellectuals to entertain several expectations. The change of regime and the ideological stress on liberalization gave them the illusion that it was possible to organize their professional space autonomously, and the illusion that the intellectual community would be able to guide the cultural discourse or even force the official ideological line was no doubt pervasive. Both Party and non-Party historians expected that a leading role would be reserved for them in the cultural politics, and that the competences they offered would be recompensed by a consensual collaboration with the regime.[21]

The actual outcome varied markedly. The hopes of the historians of the Academy were quashed,[22] while the hopes for recognition and increased resources among the staff at the Party History Institute were fulfilled.[23] The

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[20] Iacob, *Historians, Stalinism, Nation*, 529.

[21] Verdery, *National Ideology under Socialism*, 112–113; Tismăneanu, *Stalinism for All Seasons*, 197; Vasile, Viața intelectuală, 197.

[22] In his memoir, Apostol Stan, researcher at the Academy History Institute, depicts Gheorghiu-Dej as the main person responsible for the cultural repression and regimentation of the intellectuals, and considers that after Gheorghiu-Dej's death 'the historians were waiting if not for the liquidation, at least the relaxation of ideological taboos and censorship' [Apostol Stan, *Istorie și politică în România comunistă*, 227]. Other memoirs do not state the authors' perception of the new leader at the beginning of his mandate, rather the understanding of it they acquired during the following years – and their consequent negative judgement. See, i.e., Constantiniu, *De la Răutu și Roller*, 296–309; Constantiniu makes abundant use of Party documents published in the 2000s, but omits, among other things, his own perceptions of the new leadership.

[23] From his position as scientific secretary of the Party History Institute, Titu Georgescu recalls that he had great expectations of the new leadership. In 1965, Georgescu was appointed editor-in-chief of the *Anale de Istorie*, and was instructed by the Institute leadership to discuss the scholarly profile of the review with Andrei Oțetea, Petre Constantinescu-Iași and Traian Lungu, who were Marxist historians but who also had a considerable cultural capital that the Party wished to exploit. Georgescu wrote in his diary that he believed that the Institute leadership was 'confused by the reorientation that is manifested in the leadership of the Party and was concerned that I had free hands 'from above'' [Georgescu, *Tot un fel de istorie*, 351]. Gheorghe I. Ioniță, researcher at the Party History Institute until 1965, considers that the road towards a new history-writing had already been opened by the 1964 April declaration, a 'conjuncture where great

upgraded status of the Academy historians in the decision-making process of the cultural politics, even if still subordinated to the Party, was a promise that Ceaușescu had made in 1965, but was never realized. The reaffirmed leading role of the Party was evident in the late 1960s, and was proclaimed solemnly in the 1971 July theses which regimented Romanian culture and re-established direct Party control of the cultural sphere in a mode similar to the previous period of Stalinism.[24] But the trend towards Party regimentation was already present in 1965.

Together with an emphasis on the liberalizing aspects of the new politics, the leadership stressed the ideological traits that revised Party history, giving the historians central importance in the political self-representation of the regime. From its former peripheral aspect under the previous regime, history now assumed vital importance, becoming central in the new political discourse. This meant a dual policy was employed: first, to emphasise the novelty of the new policy and disclaim its connection with the former regime, and second, to shift the blame for "errors" in the past to the previous regime, its leadership, and its Soviet tutors. There was a renewed emphasis on the leading role of the Party in bridging social and national interests, and in the reassertion of the Romanian national specificity.[25]

At the 9th Congress of the Party in 1965, Ceaușescu stressed the importance of historical research when studying 'the domain of homeland history' ('*domeniul istoriei patriei*'),[26] 'reporting the facts in an objective way, in full conformity with reality'.[27] The appeal to 'facts' and 'reality' was inserted in a general discourse on the leading role of Marxist-Leninist ideology in the interpretation of the social world, and defined Marxism as a 'living science' whose 'purity […] against the deformations of reformist, revisionist, dogmatic or other nature'[28] should be preserved. By bringing national history into the Party discourse, Ceaușescu had basically announced the subsuming of national history to the ideological tenets of the Party. He also emphasised the importance of preparing an official synthesis of Party history,[29] and presented an outline of some of its key passages. This historical revision had

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efforts have been made to reaffirm the real history, *as it was*' [Ioniță, *O viață, un destin. Istorii știute și neștiute*, 94].

[24] Pavelescu, *Colivia de catifea,* III–IX.

[25] Ibidem. See also RCP, *Congresul al IX lea al PCR*, cit.

[26] RCP, *Congresul al IX lea al PCR*, 92.

[27] Ibidem.

[28] Ibid., 90–91.

[29] Ibid., 92.

a pedagogic, educational function, which was national in content[30] and Stalinist in form.[31] Party history was also demonstrated to be a weapon in the hands of the leadership, making it possible to call for a repartition of responsibilities for the errors of the past to the previous leadership and to those among the higher activists who had been in power since the time of Gheorghiu-Dej.

While the national public, informed by the propaganda apparatus, seems to have perceived Ceaușescu as a moderate, reasonable reformer (as would become evident in 1968), his aspiration to heighten the ideological level of the population and to provide historical arguments to eliminate his adversaries politically were in sharp contrast to this image. Despite the fact that he appealed for the restoration of national history and its traditions, and also the rehabilitation of some key intellectuals of the past, he never said that the bourgeois ideas of those rehabilitated would be allowed to be popularised. Instead, he stressed that it was 'necessary to keep up the ideological vigilance and a combative attitude against these kinds of [bourgeois] manifestations. The fight [against] these [tendencies] must be based on a large-scale political-educative work'.[32] Rather than liberalization, this was actually a re-implementation of old-fashioned Stalinism.[33]

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[30] Ibidem: 'restoring the heroic struggle of the communists, […] of the entire people in the spirit of the glorious traditions of the revolutionary movement of our homeland, of the Romanian Communist Party, skilful leader of the fight for freedom and happiness of our homeland and people.'

[31] Ibid., 93.: 'A task of great meaning for Party activities is the intensification of the political work for the creation of the new man, animated by the noble ideals of socialism, by communist moral principles, with a vast cultural horizon'.

[32] Ibidem.

[33] Observing the development of censorship, Ioana Macrea-Toma reaches the same conclusion regarding this historical period. The censorship system was basically simplified, optimized, and became capillary in each and every editorial board and steering committee of newspapers, journals, radio and television broadcasts, and inside all institutions of cultural production. This process was part of the reshaping of the persisting Soviet model. As Ioana Macrea-Toma has pointed out, these simplifications meant: 'the end of the quantitative period in the censorial domain, since the tasks were distributed among the other organs and then left to the consideration of the editorial boards. There were numerical restrictions on staff (in 1965 DGPT had 436 employees and in 1968 400), but clearly the reduction in personnel does not demonstrate any political opening, rather that the stabilization […] of the interactions was transferred to a literary field with undefined borders between censors and writers'. Ioana Macrea-Toma, *Privilighenția. Instituții literarii în comunismul românesc* (Cluj-Napoca: Casă Cărții de Știință, 2009), 210–212.

On the other hand, the new leadership was sending a different kind of message to the scholars, one of openness and recognition. In May 1965, before the 9th congress, Ceauşescu arranged meetings with scientists (7th May), intellectuals and artists (19th May). These were the first public meetings of the new leader with this particular category of workers, and were presented as an informal exchange of views. Ceauşescu presented himself 'as the simple messenger of the Political Bureau'.[34] The meetings were introduced by Ceauşescu, who explained the importance for Romania of science and humanities as implementations of Marxism-Leninism. Instead of insisting on the leading role of the Party in the development of culture, as he would do later in July at the 9th congress, he stressed the importance of an open debate between scientists for the sake of further development[35] and asked for their help in implementing the Party's cultural politics: 'it is true that if they [the plans] are badly made, […] I would like to receive more substantial help from you, from all the men of science'.[36]

During this session with Party and state representatives,[37] only the historian and high Party official Petre Constantinescu-Iaşi expressed a positive opinion about the return of the Academy of the Romanian Popular Republic to its original name, *Academia Română*, in order to re-establish, in his words, the tradition to which the men of science were bound. At the same meeting, Andrei Oţetea expressed his concern about the state of universal history, which had been neglected for a long time because 'the elaboration of *Istoria României* […] has absorbed all our work efforts and clearly all our concerns about universal history…have become incidental'.[38]

Like Constantinescu-Iaşi, Oţetea hoped for the re-establishment of this tradition in historical research.[39] Oţetea expressed his concerns about the

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[34] Lavinia Betea (ed.), Cristina Diac, Florin-Răzvan Mihai, Ilarion Ţiu, *Viaţa lui Ceauşescu* (Bucharest: Adevarul Holding, 2012), 143. This work maintains that Ceauşescu's vision on the function of the intellectuals in the regime was not innovative, being based on a classical rhetoric from the Marxist-Leninist repertoire, and considers the apparent openings towards the intellectuals more as an 'image campaign for the opinion leaders' (143).

[35] ANIC, CC al PCR, Cancelarie, 63/1965, ff. 2–29, published in A. Pavelescu, L. Dumitru (eds.), *P.C.R. şi intelectualii,* 2-20; 3.

[36] Ibid., 4.

[37] Chivu Stoica, Alexandru Bârlădeanu, Emil Bodnăraş, Leonte Răutu, Paul Niculescu-Mizil, Gheorghe Gaston Marin, Gogu Rădulescu; ibid., 2.

[38] Ibid., 16.

[39] In Oţetea's words, 'abandoning in the meanwhile the problems of universal history, we have broken with the glorious tradition of the past where Nicolae Iorga played an import-

actual state of Romanian historiography, calling for increased professiona-lization of historical research and confronting openly the propaganda apparatus on this point. He criticized the attempts of 'amateur' historians to 'interfere' with the activities of the professionals: 'nothing endangers the pro-fessionalization [*specializarea*] more than the continuation of some amateur practices and the intervention of amateurs in higher education'.[40] Oțetea was referring quite clearly to the historians at the Party History Institute, who had interfered heavy-handedly in the work on contemporary Romanian history, *Istoria României*. He probably trusted in the openness under Ceaușescu, and expressed his concerns about the intervention of 'amateurs' with some emphasis: 'In mathematics a non-specialist is quickly discovered. In the history [discipline] it is more difficult'.[41] On the same occasion, Oțetea pleaded for the co-option 'of the elements more endowed with scientific attitudes and, thank God, we have more to choose from. In front of the examination committees there is an entire people, not only an elite '.[42]

During the previous five years, the work of the state and Party organiza-tions and the professional historians had entered a phase of high-level collaboration. The leadership had, on several occasions and for several major projects, asked the historians to cooperate with the regime and offer their professional skills. On these conditions, the intellectuals had suc-ceeded in reconquering those spaces of professional life that had once constituted a monopoly of the Party propagandists. But this new attitude of openness from the Party, counterbalanced by the requests of the historians regarding the state of their profession, was hardly a trait inaugurated by the new regime. Rather, it was a result of the politics endorsed during the last years of the previous regime. Historians and activists was rather interested in which new resources and key positions the new leadership would allocate for cultural politics. The History Institute of the Academy and the Party History Institute were in competition, and only the political leadership could decide on their financing and reshaping.

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ant role in world historiography and others have succeeded in ensuring an increasingly larger placement for our historiography in universal historiography'; ibidem.

[40] Ibid., 17.

[41] Ibidem.

[42] Ibidem. The reference to the elite refers to the speech by Ilie Murgulescu, who had shortly before pointed out that the majority of the students in secondary education were sons and daughters of city dwellers, while the youth from the countryside were less well represented; ibid., 6.

In January 1965, the Romanian Academy held a common session to decide about internal restructuring 'through the adoption of sections and sectors according to the actual needs of the researchers'.[43] The session informed the government of the wish among the scientific and scholarly community to restructure the profile of the research units through the dissolution of some research centres, and the transformation of some institutes into research centres.[44] The suggestions of the Academy took into account the views of the scientific community. These views involved some important innovations, like the re-establishing of the Centre of Sociological Research, and some specific reallocations of competences and financing for the institutes of historical research.[45]

Specific requests for the improvement of historical research had already been listed in a report on the activities in the domain of historical sciences presented to the Science and Art Section on 16 January 1965.[46] The report stressed the wide range of activities of historical research during recent years and the 'enlargement of the thematic sphere of the research and the heightening of its qualitative level', indicating as a major distinctive trait of recent times the 'increased competence of the researchers and […] new young cadres, well prepared'.[47] In conclusion, the report stressed the increased participation of Romanian historians at international conferences and congresses and the creation of several reviews in foreign languages to disseminate Romanian research abroad (*Revue Roumaine d'Histoire*, *Revue des Etudes Sud-Est Europeennes*, *Dacia*). The report also stressed the im-

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[43] ANIC, CC al PCR, Propaganda şi Agitaţie, 7/1965, ff. 1–2: *Nota cu privire la reprofilarea unităţilor şi reţelei de cercetare din Academia R. P. Române* [*Note regarding the readjustment of the research units and networks in the R. P. R. Academy*], 14-1-1965.

[44] Ibidem.

[45] Those were limited to the readjustment of the History Institute, of the Art History Institute, and to the transforming of the Cluj History Institute into the History and Archaeology Institute, and the Institute for Literary History and Folklore into the Institute for History and Literary Theory. Ibidem.

[46] ANIC, CC al PCR, Propaganda şi Agitaţie, 7/1965, ff. 3–16: *Referatul de sinteză privind activitatea în domeniul ştiinţelor istorice* [*Synthesis report on the activity in the domain of historical sciences*]; f. 4. The report had been prepared by a collective of Party members who were also historians: Ion Răduţiu, Damian Hurezeanu, M. Comşa, and Nicolae Fotino). It was based on reports from the historical research centres of the Academy, and in collaboration with historians of the Party History Institute (Ion Popescu-Puţuri, Gheorghe Zaharia and Eugen Stănescu) and the Academy (Constantin Daicoviciu, Andrei Oţetea, Petre Constantinescu-Iaşi, Emil Condurachi, Ion Nestor, Gheorghe Ştefan, and Mihai Berza).

[47] Ibid., f. 5.

portance of the multi-volume *Istoria României*, whose fifth and sixth volumes were at that moment available in draft. The report listed also a number of 'negative aspects' of the state of history-writing as such but also focusing on the need to improve research conditions. They called for the rehabilitation of the nineteenth century and interwar historiographical tradition,[48]and stressed the necessity to return to universal history.[49]

Besides these requests made by historians at the Academy History Institute and the universities, there were also requests from the Party History Institute concerning the necessity to publish some central works on specific aspects of Party history.[50] However, a third series of requests regarding the development of Romanian contemporary history were made by both Party and non-Party historians. The requests concerned 'intensifying the study on a larger and more organized scale of the foreign policy of Romania' and all the historical events that had influenced national history, including the sensitive issue of the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact, but also a new evaluation of 'modern' history (i.e. nineteenth century history). During Stalinist times the nineteenth century had been seen as the epoch of the formation of working-class consciousness, and therefore its study was a field of contention between the Party History Institute and the Academy Institute. At the end of Gheorghiu-Dej's regime, historians and Party historians joined ranks in a common request to the regime to allocate more resources for the study of this period,[51] but also for the development of

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[48] 'Not enough was made in the domain of the critical reconsideration of the old historiography', while 'the appreciation of the heritage [*moștenirii*] left by the old historiography has proven itself very useful in the production of *Istoria României*'. Therefore, 'the continuation and the extension of the research of critical reconsideration of the important historians of the past – A. D. Xenopol, N. Iorga, D. Onciul, V. Pârvan – and the study of our interwar Marxist historiography is required'; ibid, f. 12.

[49] Ibid., f. 15.

[50] Ibid., f. 12: 'it is necessary to publish some monographs: *The Heroic Struggles of the Railroad Workers and Oilmen*; *The Insurrection of August 1944; The Contribution of Romania to the* Anti-Hitler *War*'. Studies on the interwar period were seen as essential, as well as the clarification of the problems related to the fight against fascism and the Royal Dictatorship.

[51] Ibid., f. 14: 'regarding modern history, in order to understand the evolution of political life in Romania, of the relationship and disposition of the class forces – it is necessary to edit some monographs and volumes of documents about the revolutionary traditions of the Romanian people […] as well as some monographs on the origin and the development of the bourgeois-landowner regime [*regimul burghezo-moșieresc*], on the history of the political parties during the nineteenth century and the first decades of the twentieth century […] some monographs that highlight the events of national history that have

auxiliary sciences, modern technology for photocopying, and a general request for the acquisition of archival sources.[52]

This document signalled that, at the end of the Gheorghiu-Dej era, the historians and the Party historians were, irrespective of their willingness or unwillingness, collaborating on a common field of research, uniting in the demand for more resources. Gheorghiu-Dej, during his last five years of power, succeeded in obtaining from the Academy historians what he wanted: they led the reconstruction of the cultural discourse and, most certainly, developed the historiographical narrative canon. In this situation, they were allowed to express their requests in order to improve national history-writing. They had the professional experience that the Party History Institute did not possess, since the expertise of the Institute historians was limited to very specific aspects of contemporary history.

However, the Party History Institute also made certain requests that were meant to result in certain tasks and resources being allocated to them. The Institute was clearly in a position where its standing was deteriorating while the Academy's status was rising. Being devoted primarily to a very limited field of study, the Institute historians and activists lacked competence in fields such universal history, national history, archaeology, or historical periods apart from the contemporary. The Party History Institute had the specific task of researching only on a minor part of the history of Romania – namely, the history of the workers' movement and that of the Party itself. Gheorghiu-Dej gradually allowed the Academy historians to investigate and reconstruct the national past in order to exploit it politically, identifying as far as possible the Party as the defender of national culture. The control of Party orthodoxy in historiography, once a source of power for the Institute, had now ceased to exist. Instead, the regime wished to infuse the canon with a new national significance, moving away from the problems and narrowness of Party history. This meant that they were more prone to listen to the historians, and to how they intended to develop historiography and which instruments they would need in this endeavour.

The Party History Institute was then, apparently, in a one-way street devised by the Party, with no possibility of becoming a leading institution. But something unexpected happened when Ceaușescu assumed power. Besides the emphatic continuation of his predecessor's strategy to listen to

influenced its development, like the agrarian reform of 1864, the war of independence […] etc.'.
[52] Ibid., f. 16.

the intellectuals, he was also very inclined to strengthen the role of Party and national history as central elements of propaganda. For this reason, he wanted a new Party history to be produced and inserted into a nationalized version of Romanian history.[53]

Already on 14 October 1965, Leonte Răutu sent a report to the Chancellery on the drafting of the *Romanian Communist Party History*, explaining the canon that Ceaușescu wanted for this volume.[54] The report proposed an editorial board composed of members of the Party History Institute, the History Institute and the Institute of Economy of the Academy, the Ștefan Gheorghiu Party High School, the publishing house Editura Politică, and the veteran cadres.[55] When elaborated, the texts were to be submitted to a newly instituted Commission of the Executive Committee of the CC of the PCR for the History of the Party, a group constituted by the leadership of the Party.[56]

The project included the publishing of a synthetic work 'of 200–250 pages', in eight chapters[57] by 1966, celebrating the forty-fifth anniversary of the Party. Later, 'a work of larger proportions' was planned to follow: 'the History of the RCP, whose editing was to be finalized by the end of 1967'.[58] In a short summary, Răutu indicated the main points of this revision for the history of the workers' movement and the RCP during the twentieth century: the socialist Party should be reconsidered in positive terms for its 'patriotic and internationalist character' during the First World War and its position on the union of Transylvania with Romania. '[T]he creation of national unity' should be kept separate from 'the critical analysis of the

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[53] Pavelescu, *Colivia de catifea*, V.

[54] ANIC, CC al PCR, Cancelarie, 144/1965, f. 58–70, *Referat cu privire la întocmirea Istoriei PCR*, published in A. Pavelescu, L. Dumitru (eds.), *P.C.R. și intelectualii,* 41–48, 41.

[55] 'Editorial Board: Ion Popescu-Puțuri, Gheorghe Zaharia, Nicolae Goldberger, Augustin Deac, Gheorghe Matei, Titu Georgescu, Ștefan Voicu, Valter Roman, Aron Petric, Ilie Rădulescu, Ion Stoian, Gheorghe Badrus, Mihai Petrescu, Vasile Vlad'; ANIC, CC al PCR, Cancelarie, 144/1965, *Anexa 2*, f. 58–70, published in *P.C.R. și intelectualii,* eds. A. Pavelescu, L. Dumitru, 41–48; 44.

[56] 'Proposals regarding the Commission of the Executive Committee of the CC of the RCP for History of the Party: Nicoale Ceaușescu, Chivu Stoica, Ion Gheorghe Maurer, Gheorghe Apostol, Alexandru Bârlădeanu, Emil Bodnăraș, Alexandru Drăghici, Paul Nicolescu-Mizil, Leonte Răutu, Manea Mănescu'; ANIC, CC al PCR, Cancelarie, 144/1965, *Referat cu privire la întocmirea Istoriei PCR*, f. 58–70, in *P.C.R. și intelectualii,* eds., Pavelescu, Dumitru, 41–48; 43.

[57] Ibid, 42.

[58] Ibidem.

confusions, and political and organizational inconsistencies and weaknesses of that Party.[59]

For the study of the interwar period, the role of the Comintern needed to be analysed, especially its importance for the creation and development of the world communist movement, but also considering 'the negative consequences of the functions and work methods of the Comintern on the Party line and activity, and on cadre policy'[60] Moreover, the synthesis would need to reconsider the theses expressed at the 5th congress of the Party, indicating what brought the Communist Party to identify Romania as a multinational state and Transylvania as 'an occupied territory'.[61] These considerations were a direct revision of the Soviet-informed politics that viewed pre-communist Romania as an imperialist state, and touched also the history of Bessarabia, requiring 'a treatment of the activities developed by the Party in the territories that presently are not part of Romania'.[62] At the same time, the criticism of the actions of the Party during the years of underground resistance would need to indicate the organizational errors made but also its successes 'in the realization of some important agreements and democratic and antifascist actions'.[63] And, in conclusion, the entire revised history would have to be framed 'in the general history of the homeland, emphasising the role of the working class and its Party'.[64]

A few days after the report, the Central Committee, including Ceaușescu, met the cadres of the Party History Institute to discuss the proposals concerning the preparation of the Party history volume. On that occasion, Răutu announced the decision of the Executive Committee of the CC to establish an enlarged Scientific Council of the Party History Institute, composed of Party historians, Academy historians, Party propagandists, and representatives of the Party publishing house[65], while a Board of the

[59] ANIC, CC al PCR, Cancelarie, 144/1965, *Anexa 3*, f. 58–70, in *P.C.R. și intelectualii*, eds. Pavelescu, Dumitru, 41–48, 45.
[60] Ibidem.
[61] Ibid., 45–46.
[62] Ibid., 46.
[63] Ibidem.
[64] Ibidem.
[65] ANIC, CC al PCR, Cancelarie, 149/1965, ff. 2–26; quoted in Mioara Anton, Ioan Chiper (eds.), *Instaurarea regimului Ceaușescu. Continuitate și ruptură în relațiile româno-sovietice* (Bucharest: Institutul Național Pentru Studiul Totalitarismului, Institutul Român de Studii Internaționale "Nicolae Titulescu", 2003), 227–246; 229. The members of the Scientific Council were Ion Ardeleanu, Iosif Ardeleanu, Victor Axenciuc, Gheorghe Badrus, Ladislau Banyai, Eliza Campus, Nicolae Cioroiu, Grigore

Scientific Council composed by Party History Institute historians and Party propagandists was envisaged in order to 'ensure an operational activity'.[66]

Ceauşescu specified the table of contents that the synthesis should follow. He also pointed to the alleged errors of interpretation to be found in the fifth volume of the *History of Romania*, where Romania was designated an imperialist country: 'This conclusion has no scientific basis',[67] he asserted. He then repeated the points present in Răutu's report,[68] stressing particularly the negative interference that activists 'that were complete strangers to the life and activity of our Party' had had on the interwar Party.[69] Ceauşescu stressed the importance of showing the Comintern's responsibility for the difficulties that the Party experienced during this period, and the repressive measures that it used against the Party organizations and the Party cadres.[70] This meant drawing a line between 'good communists' and those who had tried to divert the Party's action. In addition, the history of the Party was inserted into the history of the country, rehabilitating entire categories of people active in the interwar socialist, social-democrat, and liberal parties, as well as King Michael.[71]

This revision was a powerful instrument in the leadership's hands, since Ceauşescu's adversaries inside the Party would have been accused (and found irremediably guilty) of betraying both the Party and the country. Nevertheless, for the reformists among the Party historians, these words sounded like a call for a truthful rendering of Party history, allowing them

Comartin, Miron Constantinescu, N. N. Constantinescu, Petre Constantinescu-Iaşi, Mihail Cruceanu, Augustin Deac, Nicolae Deleanu, Nicolae Dinu, Miu Dobrescu, Ion Felea, Titu Georgescu, Nicolae Goldberger, Nicolae Gogoneaţă, Ervin Hutira, Vasile Liveanu, Vasile Maciu, Gheorghe Matei, Clara Cuşnir-Mihailovici, Andrei Oţetea, Ion Pas, Mihai Petrescu, Aron Petric, Nicolae Petrovici, Constantin Pârvulescu, Ion Popescu-Puţuri, Ilie Rădulescu, Victor Raţă, Valter Roman, Teodor Rudenco, Gheorghe Stoica, Ion Stoica, Anton Tatu Jianu, Gheorghe Vasilichi, Ion Vinţe, Constantin Vlad, Vasile Vlad, Ştefan Voicu, Barbu Zaharescu, Gheorghe Zaharia.
[66] Ibidem. The Board was formed by Ion Popescu-Puţuri, Nicolae Goldberger, Gheorghe Zaharia, Augustin Deac, Titu Georgescu, Nicolae Cioroiu, Gheorghe Matei, Aron Petric, Ilie Rădulescu, Valter Roman, Gheorghe Stoica, Ion Stoica, Ştefan Voicu, Vasile Vlad, Miu Dobrescu.
[67] Ibid., 233.
[68] Ibid., 234.
[69] Ibid., 235–236.
[70] Ibidem.
[71] Ibid., 237.

to write the history of the Party with its highs and lows. But the leadership hurried to stress that this was not really the case.[72]

The historical revision was not meant to search for new interpretations in interwar Party documents; nor was the interwar historiography rehabilitated for this purpose. Ceaușescu stressed: 'we must make a strong appeal to the classical works. […] but, appealing to the classics, we must not hide behind the quotes from the classical works and draw incorrect conclusions'.[73] This support of historiographical classics was fundamental for the new legitimacy-search strategy, but by Ceaușescu's own admission, it was still secondary to the new general historiographical canon, whose prime beneficiary was the Party, not the historical sciences. The historians were certainly invited to guide the re-evaluation of the national past, but only within set and definite limits.

While during the first half of the 1960s the regime actively promoted the role of state cultural institutions like the Academy, the new regime instead favoured the Party institutions, imposing a new and strategically central historiographical canon for Party and national history. Essentially, the elaboration of this new canon was left in the hands of the Party and its Party History Institute historians. This countertrend was gradual, but the diversity allowed in history-writing in the mid-1960s disappeared completely towards the end of the decade. It was instituted as a policy with the 1971 July thesis, establishing the leading role of the Party in the production of culture. The reform of the Party History Institute and the journal *Anale de Istorie*, and the foundation of *Magazin Istoric,* were the first signs of this incipient regimentation.

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[72] Ibid., 244–246: For example, Barbu Zaharescu, former vice-director of the Party History Institute, thought that Ceaușescu was allowing the history revision Zaharescu had called for in 1958: 'many errors have been made [by the Party] and we have to say how it really was'. But Ceaușescu made it clear that the new canon did not mean that the historians had a completely free hand when reassessing Party history. Answering Zaharescu, he explained that the problems of the past should receive the '*correct*' interpretation, since the interwar Party documents were not based on a Marxist-Leninist analysis: 'comrade Barbu Zaharescu is right […] but the work is twofold: a way to base ourselves on reality and the other [is] to try to present the work in a so-called objective manner, but actually untrue, not as it actually was at that time. We must make a scientific analysis [*analiză științifică*]. Many of the Party documents from that period are not based on a Marxist-Leninist scientific analysis of the state of our country, our history, we must state not only what is shown in the respective documents, but we must analyse with the utmost attention the state of the Party work in Romania, show if we have interpreted it correctly and what happened in reality'.
[73] Ibidem.

6.3 From Party History Institute to Institute for Historical and Socio-Political Studies

In March 1966, the Executive Committee of the CC approved the transformation of the Party History Institute into the Institute of Historical and Socio-Political Studies of the CC of the RCP.[74] The concrete aims of the new Institute were: first, the editing of a History of the Party under the supervision of the Executive Committee; second, the editing of studies concerning the creation and development of the socialist movement in Romania; and third, the study of political history, socio-economic problems, the history of ideas in modern and contemporary Romania, and of the history of the 'struggle for national and social liberation during previous epochs'.[75] Among the new fields of interest for the Institute were also the study of the international workers' movement and the creation of the socialist movements in other countries, as well as movements striving for national liberation.

The motivation of the decision of the Executive Committee indicated that 'theoretical and methodological problems of historical research' should also be studied 'in relationship with other social sciences'.[76] A theoretical opening was made in the report, stating that the Institute should analyse 'the conceptions and the points of view of the Marxist and non-Marxist historians on the history of the workers' movement, the modern and contemporary history of our homeland, and the modern and contemporary universal history'.[77] The report also suggested that a wider range of competence should be given to the Institute, most importantly the right to confer doctoral degrees.

To this project, the propaganda secretary of the CC, Ion Iliescu, objected that, with the new responsibilities regarding modern history, ISISP would 'double' the work assignment already given to the Iorga Institute.[78] But his concerns were not taken into consideration, probably because the apparent collaboration between Party and non-Party institutions in the collectively conducted cultural sphere was obscuring the actual competition between

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[74] ANIC, ISISP, A-2/1 vol. I, f. 12.

[75] ANIC, ISISP, A-2/1, Vol. I, f. 13–15: *Referat cu privire la transformarea Institutului de Istorie a partidului într-un Institut de studii istorice şi social-politice de pe lîngă CC al PCR* [*Report regarding the transformation of the Party History Institute in an Institute for Historical and Socio-Political Studies*]; f. 13–14.

[76] Ibid., f. 14.

[77] Ibidem.

[78] ANIC, ISISP, A-2/3, vol. II, f. 232: *Nota* [*Note*].

the institutions for the hegemony on the discourse on the past. The Party History Institute's leadership had striven ever since Roller's time to establish a separate section on nineteenth century history. Finally, in 1965–66, the Party leadership agreed to give the Institute more resources in order to initiate research on that period, thus entering into direct competition with the Iorga Institute.

During the months following the decision of the Executive Committee, the Institute was provided with extended means, a partial enlargement, and new organizational responsibilities. The seven sections already in existence[79] were reformed with the reorganization of the Institute structure into four sections, with a total of 14 sub-units (sectors).[80]

The journals edited by the Institute increased from one, *Anale de Istorie* (the name was changed from *Analele Institutului de Istorie a Partidului de pe lângă CC al PMR – The Annals of the Party* History *Institute*, founded in 1955)[81] to three: *Anale de Istorie*, with an unaltered composition of editors and staff; the newly established *Buletin Informativ* (*Informative Bulletin*), a documentary journal for the internal use of the Institute; and *Magazin Istoric* (*Historical Magazine*), established as a 'monthly review for wide distribution'.[82]

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[79] 'The beginning of the workers' movement until 1921', 'The History of the RCP 1921–1944', 'Mass organizations', 'Popular revolution', 'The International', 'Scholarly information and documentation', 'The Military'; Ibidem.

[80] The first of the four sections was called 'History of the homeland, the Communist Party, and the revolutionary and democrat movement in Romania'. It was divided into seven sectors: two for the study of newly allotted fields for the Institute ('Popular movements, XV–XIX centuries' and '1821–1893'), the others preserving the old organizational structure ('1893–1918', '1918–1944', '1944–1947', 'History of the mass organizations', 'The Military'). The second section, 'Formation and development of the socialist precepts in Romania', included two completely new sectors, 'Economic politics of the Party and of the state' and 'State life, social structure, culture'. The third section, 'Theoretical and methodological problems of historical research' included the international historiographical documentation sector, already existing, and the newly established 'Philosophy of history and methodology of historical research'. The last section, 'International Problems', included the already established sector 'History of the international workers' movement (including the history of resistance) and the creation and development of the socialist regimes', and two new sectors dedicated to the 'Problems of the movements of national liberation' and to the 'Socio-political and ideological problems of the contemporary capitalist system'; ANIC, ISISP, CC al PCR, Cancelarie, 143/1966, ff. 23–37: *Referat*; ff. 24–25.

[81] Titu Georgescu, *Tot un fel de istorie*, 384. Georgescu attributes to himself the suggestion, reiterated many times, of changing the name of the review.

[82] ANIC, ISISP, CC al PCR, Cancelarie, 143/1966, ff. 23–37: *Referat*, ff. 26–27.

The Institute staff increased from 86 to 125 employees.[83] The new organization included a newly founded library with a personnel consisting of ten librarians and bibliographers,[84] and the three collateral parts of the Institute obtained certain advantages in the general reorganization, with the number of positions increased.[85]

In connection with the reorganization, some established Institute members were given higher positions. This was the case for Titu Georgescu, nominated new vice-director, while Aurel Petri was promoted to assistant scientific secretary in the absence of a regular scientific secretary. In an attempt to increase the number of scholarly trained personnel, at that moment represented by 11 graduates in history, eight doctoral students and 29 researchers with higher state education degrees,[86] several projects were proposed to include into the ranks of the Institute members of the Iorga Institute,[87] but not all these plans were actually realized.

ISISP continued in 1968 to receive more resources, increasing its staff from 125 to 135 employees, comprising 85 employees with "researcher"

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[83] ANIC, ISISP, CC al PCR, Cancelarie, 143/1966, f. 30. More specifically, it grew from 53 to 76 scholarly researchers (82 if the editorial board of *Anale de Istorie* and the regional sectors are included), and from 33 to 49 employees with administrative and technical tasks. The implementation of the new scheme was gradual: already in 1966, 25 researchers were recruited, and by 1967 the scheme was completed in accordance with the provisional plans.

[84] ANIC, ISISP, f. 98: *Nota.* ANIC, ISISP, CC al PCR, Cancelarie, 143/1966, *Referat*, f. 29. See also ANIC, ISISP, A-2/3, Vol. I, f. 125. The Institute researchers had until then been obliged to use the library of the CC, but not all of them actually had full or even partial access to it. See ANIC, ISISP, A-2/3, Vol. II, ff. 39–40: *Referat 30-6-1966*, f. 40.

[85] The Party History Museum increased from 87 to 109 employees, and the Doftana Museum from 6 to 10. The archive was reorganized according to a never-applied decision in 1960 on the handling of Party documents, and it benefited from two new archivists, three employees for the photo atelier, and four employees for photocopying and the document conservation laboratory. ANIC, CC al PCR, Cancelarie, 143/1966, ff. 29–36.

[86] ANIC, ISISP, A-2/1, Vol. I, f. 13–15: *Referat cu privire la transformarea Institutului de Istorie a partidului într-un Institut de studii istorice și social-politice de pe lîngă CC al PCR* [*Report regarding the transformation of the Party History Institute in an Institute for Historical and Socio-Political Studies*]; f. 15.

[87] See, i.e., ANIC, ISISP, A-2/3, Vol. II, ff. 44–48; and ANIC, ISISP, A-2/3, Vol. II, ff. 92–95; in these schemes, the names of several Iorga researchers appear, but none of them, with the exception of Viorica Moisuc, actually joined the Institute: Apostol Stan, Emil Porțeanu, Vasile Liveanu, Eliza Campus, Ludovic Demény, Traian Lungu, Traian Udrea. See also Ștefan Ștefanescu, *Enciclopedia Istoriografiă românești* (Bucharest: Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1978).

status: seven directors, 55 researchers, 10 archivists, seven employees for the *Anale de Istorie*, and six researchers in Cluj and Iași.[88]

In conclusion, the Party History Institute benefited from its reorganization into ISISP. From a position of subordination during the period 1960-1964, it was transformed into a prioritized institute, which should have equalled the Academy in importance. Its presentation to the general public under a new name, with a renewed journal and with a new popular magazine, was intended to present it as a serious scholarly institution with a substantial cultural authority. This meant it had to be distanced as far as possible from the memory of its predecessor, the Party History Institute, trying to give the impression that the Institute no longer depended on the Party for its legitimacy. In order to achieve this, resources in terms of personnel and assets were necessary. However, it is noteworthy that the professionalization of its staff was only marginal, since the aim of writing Party history remained fundamentally a Party endeavour where the historians could participate only at a subordinated level.

Reforming the Party History Institute into ISISP, the new leadership wanted to empower the propaganda apparatus in order to gain legitimation inside the Party. The discourse on the national specificity provided by the political canon provided the back up to justify this mimicry of scholarly institutions by propaganda ones. Fundamentally, Ceaușescu reversed a process begun in 1959, when the "scholarly way" and the "political way" started gradually to become two instruments in the hands of the political cause. By this reversed-modality, Ceaușescu claimed that the primacy of the Party was not open for discussion. Nevertheless, no historians had questioned this primacy, with whom they had been collaborating since 1959 in a regime of partial, but substantial, autonomy. In practice, Ceaușescu changed some vital features of the relationship between political power and scholarship, even though the consequences of this change would only become evident few years later.

6.4 A new review for a new Romania: *Magazin Istoric*

The transformation of ISISP was accompanied by the foundation of a new review, apparently an effort by the Party to produce what is presently

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[88] ANIC, ISISP, A-2/3, Vol. I, ff. 22–25, *Schema* [*Scheme*], f. 25.

known as popular history. This project was included in the report of October 1966 concerning the transformation, and thus should be seen as integral part the restructuring of ISISP and as a realization allowed by the new flow of resources. In the report, the necessity of 'a monthly review, of wide distribution, named *Magazin Istoric*' is expressed 'considering the great interest that exists in our country for the problems of history'.[89]

The argument for having this kind of review was directly connected to the examples offered by the historiographical landscape of the Western countries, which for the Romanian communist regime constituted an absolute novelty: 'reviews of this kind exist in several countries, among others England, France, Italy, the USA, for example (only in France there are six-monthly reviews)'.[90] According to Titu Georgescu, the topics for the review should be 'as wide as possible, but in an accessible language for the reader'.[91]

In January 1966 Georgescu edited, together with ISISP and non-ISISP colleagues, the pilot number of the review, which included a vast display of topics, from national history to universal history, from archaeology in the Mediterranean Sea to American history.[92] The pilot number was presented to Leonte Răutu, who made ideologically motivated corrections in every single article.[93] Georgescu was assisted by Alexandru Savu, Ion Bărbulescu, Aurică Simion, and Stelian Neagoe when monitoring the ideological level of the articles according to the corrections inserted by Răutu, even introducing 'three quotes from Ceauşescu in order to save two articles that had been questioned'.[94]

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[89] From the description: 'the review will contain materials, in an attractive form, regarding events of the history of the homeland, the Party, the democratic and progressive movements during different periods, the results of archaeological and historical investigations, unedited documents, biographies of historical personalities, memoirs, reviews of historical works [published] domestically and abroad, many illustrations, maps, specimens, portraits. At the same time it will publish materials regarding the main events of universal history, especially those linked to the history of our homeland'; ANIC, CC al PCR, Cancelarie, 143/1966, ff. 23–27: *Referat*, f. 27.

[90] Ibidem.

[91] The complete description given by Georgescu in his memoir is: 'a kind of historical magazine where we should include articles starting with the neolitic period, the Assyrians, the Egyptians, the Greeks, the Daco-Romans, continuing with Romanian and universal history, scholarly, academic, journalistic, literary writings, memoirs, archival [articles], well, a circle as wide as possible, but in an accessible language for the reader who must be connected to what we call history'; Georgescu, *Tot un fel de istorie*, 393.

[92] Magazin Istoric, 'Către cititori', *Magazin Istoric* (1/1967), 1.

[93] T. Georgescu, *Tot un fel de istorie*, 472.

[94] Ibid.

Finally, Titu Georgescu organized the new review's organizational scheme.[95] Dumitru Almaş, who was not a Party member,[96] but who was professor of history at the University of Bucharest, editor of the history text-book for the 11th class in 1962 and author of the fantasy-historical narratives series *Povestiri Istorice* (*Historical Tales*) was chosen as director of the review,[97] while Constantin Antip, military historian and journalist, became editor-in-chief.[98] The other members of the editorial board were all activists and historians gravitating around ISISP.[99]

After many organizational discussions with the leadership of ISISP and with Leonte Răutu, who approved the project, the first number of the journal was edited in 1967 after an intense advertising campaign using radio broadcasts and street posters.[100] The journal was initially printed in 25,000 copies, but since it immediately sold out it was republished in yet another 25,000 copies the day after its first distribution. For the second number of the journal, approval was obtained from Leonte Răutu for printing 100,000 copies.[101] The number of copies grew exponentially during the subsequent years, reaching 220,000 copies in 1968–69, and the Party asked the Press Direction to allocate a substantial provision of printing paper in order to meet the journal's needs.[102]

The success of the review was an important achievement for the Institute, especially since Editura Politică had complained about the large

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[95] ANIC, ISISP, A-2/3, Vol. II, f. 96–97: *Propuneri* [*Proposals*], f. 97.

[96] Georgescu, *Tot un fel de istorie*, 468.

[97] Ibid., 395.

[98] Ş. Ştefanescu, *Enciclopedia*, 449.

[99] The members were Gheorghe I. Ioniţă, Cristian Popişteanu, Robert Deutsch, Alexandru Savu, Mircea Ioanid, and Marian Ştefan. Florin Constantiniu recalls that Nicolae Minei, general secretary of the editorial board [Ştefan, *Trăite, Văzute, Auzite*, 11] was a medical doctor by education, and before his appointment to *Magazin Istoric* he was director of the State Office for Artist Tours, being in charge of bringing foreign artists to Romania [Constantiniu, *De la Răutu*, 317]. This detail is omitted by Georgescu, who instead writes in his memoirs that 'the editorial board reflected the orientation towards the young' [Georgescu, *Tot un fel de istorie*, 485] and by Marian Ştefan, who characterised Minei as one of the main "dynamos" of the journal (Ştefan, *Trăite, Văzute, Auzite*, 11).

[100] Ştefan, *Trăite, Văzute, Auzite*, 11.

[101] Georgescu, *Tot un fel de istorie*, 481–484.

[102] Ştefan Andreescu, presently a researcher at the Iorga Institute and editor of *Magazin Istoric* between 1970 and 1972, recalls the success of the journal: 'in fact [all the copies were] sold, this journal disappeared from the news-stands. It decreased a little while I was there, to 180.000 copies, still amazing. A huge print-run'; Interview with Ştefan Andreescu, Bucharest, 8 February 2013.

deficit that the ISISP publications caused the publishing house, amounting to almost one million lei between 1964 and 1966. Editura Politică had previously proposed to the Section for Press and Publishing Houses of the CC of the RCP that the Institute should have the resources to cover the losses incurred by the publishing of its works.[103] Since *Magazin Istoric* was only formally an independent review, being *de facto* a journal of ISISP, this unexpected success permitted the Institute and its direction to restore their finances and also to ask for additional resources. In 1968, the first nine numbers of the review generated a surplus of 1,600,000 lei, money that was distributed between the journal's financers, *Scînteia* (300,000 lei) and ISISP (1,300,000 lei).[104]

What was the actual scope of the journal? The review was presented as an instrument to 'develop the patriotism that animates the present generations in the great work of building socialism'.[105] According to Florin Constantiniu, 'apparently, *Magazin Istoric* was a popular review of history but, in reality, it was rigorously supervised by the Section of Propaganda of the CC of the RCP which, when political interests so requested, introduced articles on certain historical topics or criticisms of certain texts that had appeared in the allied countries'.[106] Since the journal was founded with the support of those in power, Constantiniu maintains that 'it was part of the effort to reconstruct national identity, a matter that had been attacked during the years of Stalinism. Its agenda also comprised the outspoken emancipation from Soviet control, the education of a wide circle of the population in the spirit of attachment to historical [national] values'.[107] Constantiniu stresses that the journal was a novelty for the domestic reader who, after two decades where history had been presented only in the form of stereotypical historical clichés, could find in it *sensational* articles.[108]

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[103] ANIC, ISISP, A-2/3, Vol. II, f. 236–237: *Către Secția presă și edituri a CC al PCR*, f. 236.

[104] ANIC, ISISP, A-3/10, Vol. III, f. 10–11: *Nota privind sediul revistei* "Magazin Istoric" [*Note on the premises of* Magazin Istoric *review*], f. 11.

[105] Magazin Istoric, 'Catre cititori', *Magazin Istoric* (1/1967), 1.

[106] Constantiniu, *De la Răutu*, 315.

[107] Ibid., 314. For example, one article contained the last conversation between Antonescu and Hitler, previously published by a review of the emigrant community, where Antonescu appeared in a positive light, not answering Hitler when asked if Romania would follow Nazi Germany until the end. Consequently, the first revision of the public image of Antonescu started at that time. Ibidem. This process continued in the 1980s (see chapter 8).

[108] Ibidem.

However, the ability of the review to attract readers was not limited to historical revisionism, but rested on the very wide variety of topics, including scandal-mongering articles on historical subjects.[109] These aspects, together with the light, easily accessible journalistic style, lacking footnotes and historiographical discussions, certainly increased its public appeal. Being richly illustrated and also very modestly priced – only two lei – no doubt added to its popularity.[110]

The appeal of the new journal relied on the quality of the writing rather than on ideological dogmatism.[111] But despite its anti-dogmatic appearance, the review was subjected to a special form of peer-review.[112] At its start, *Magazin Istoric* employed eight editors and four administrators, but the success of the review underpinned successful requests for more resources. In 1968 the review was supplied with three more editors and one more administrator,[113] and furthermore given the use of a car[114] and a new head-quarters close to ISISP 'that answers for the editing of the journal'.[115] Due to the success of the review, ISISP decided to invest new resources in a new trimestral publication edited by *Magazin Istoric*, the *Magazin Istoric Collection* (*Colecția Magazin Istoric*). This was a large-scale publication consisting of 250 pages, including both edited and unedited articles. Due to the

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[109] There were, i.e., the unedited memoirs of Constantin Argetoianu, a politician who died in a communist prison but who had written several critical texts, during the inter-war period, on King Carol II. Argetoianu's writings were considered to be 'seductive' for the public, and contributions on Carol II and Elena Lupescu, his official lover, were published regularly. Interview with Ştefan Andreescu, Bucharest, 8 February 2013.

[110] Ibidem. According to Ştefan Andreescu, '*Magazin Istoric* has been conceived as a wide manipulation [of history] by the Party, to make [the population] swallow [the official ideology], since besides the attractive articles there were those containing communist propaganda that were not swallowed any longer by the readers – so these [attractive] articles were swallowed by the youth'.

[111] Ibidem. Andreescu pinpoints that a significant detail, obvious for the readers, was the absence of the compulsory motto 'workers of the world, unite!, present in the cover page of all the publications of Romania at that time: 'if you look at each volume of *Magazin Istoric*, on the cover, on the first page, a compulsory thing for each and every journal in Romania is missing: the slogan 'workers of the world, unite!'. This shows that from the beginning this review was conceived as a well-designed diversion, made in order to propagandize the nationalist projects of the Communist Party'.

[112] Ibidem. 'There was a special kind of censorship, since other publications in history or literature were sent to the Direction of the Press – the censorship – but this one was sent directly to the CC, it was read directly by the propaganda secretary'.

[113] ANIC, ISISP, A-2/3, Vol. I, f. 51–52: Nota privînd schema redacției revistei "Magazin Istoric" [Note on the scheme of the editorial board of "Magazin Istoric"].

[114] ANIC, ISISP, A-2/3, Vol. III, f. 5.

[115] ANIC, ISISP, A-2/3, Vol. III, ff. 10–11, f. 11.

sales figures of *Magazin Istoric*, the leadership of ISISP considered that 'the editing of this collection will produce yearly a minimum net benefit of 400,000 lei'.[116] The first year, the review editors planned to publish four volumes, whose content[117] would represent the general aim of the Party's cultural politics: to continue restoring national historical traditions, national and universal history and the historical revisionism in respect to Soviet politics – under the direct supervision of ISISP.

Magazin Istoric was a result of the decision of the leadership to give priority to ISISP and to give to it the management of the new national-communist canon. The foundation of the magazine testifies that, at Party level, no real ideological relaxation was allowed, but rather that the narrative canon developed by the historians in 1960–64 was endorsed by the new political leadership, since in this Party magazine the work of non-Party historians was also published. Furthermore, the establishing of this magazine proves that ISISP had succeeded in its struggle for resources since the leadership had decided to give priority to the Party cultural apparatus, abandoning its previous dogmatism on Party history-writing. In this way, Ceauşescu upgraded the Party historians, extending their competences to national history, and thus gave them increased status and recognition. They became, in the eyes of the leadership, and consequently of the Propaganda Department, equal to their colleagues at the Academy.

6.6 Conclusions

The 'guided liberalization' inaugurated by Ceauşescu should most accurately be seen as merely a parenthesis of unfulfilled expectations among the intellectuals in general and among the historians in particular.[118] The Party organizations continued to have a major say in the decisions determining cultural policy, and started to receive more extensive resources than

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[116] ANIC, ISISP, A-3/10, Vol. III, ff. 8–9: *Nota prinvind editarea unei colecții cu tematică istorică de către redacția revistei "Magazin Istoric"* [*Note regarding the editing of a collection on history by the editorial board of the "Magazin Istoric" journal*], f. 9.

[117] Ibidem: '1 – the men and the important facts of homeland history (Decebal, the Bessarabian [dynasty], the Mușatini [dynasty], the Huniazi [dynasty], the Bălceşti [dynasty], the episodes of the armed insurrection, 2 – The minutes of the Conference of Yalta […]; 3 – from the memoirs of C. Argetoianu (in two volumes); 4 – documents of universal history'.

[118] Vasile, *Viață intelectuală*, 197.

previously. The Academy historians were certainly upgraded in the regime's policies since, as Katherine Verdery puts it, the regime intended to exploit the symbolic repertoire and the cultural authority of these producers of culture.[119] However, I argue that this was actually a more distinctive trait of the preceding period (1961–1964), since the newly released archival sources show that the dominant trait of the early Ceauşescu regime was the priority, given the propaganda apparatus and the increased stress on the leading role of the Party in cultural politics.[120]

The primacy of the Party in each and every decision made on cultural politics remained central. It is therefore relevant to see the high-level Party activists as actors in a network of interests, with each actor placed in a specific position among the Party organizations, and with certain aims: first, to safeguard the primacy of the Party organizations in the sphere of cultural politics; second, to retain the control over the resources allocated to the Party and non-Party cultural institutions; and, third, to enhance the symbolic repertoire and the cultural authority of the Party itself in order to reinforce its popular legitimacy and, consequently, to retain control over material resources.

The struggle of the propagandists to increase their access to resources was not favoured by the ideological needs of the new leadership, but by its more tangible need to obtain support and legitimacy *within* the Party. This meant keeping the existing networks in the cultural institutions, including ISISP,[121] and empowering them in the context of a main project, the

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[119] Verdery, *National Ideology Under Socialism*, 109.
[120] This is also the conclusion in I. Macrea-Toma, *Privilighenţia*, cit. and in C. B. Iacob's dissertation: 'by 1964 the communist regime had reached the conclusion that the existing system of planned sciences 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. […] Science was now judged on the basis of its efficiency, of its contribution to augment the material and spiritual riches of the people' (Iacob, 449).
[121] In fact, the great majority of the activists who were leading those Party organizations were kept in their places by Ceauşescu once he was in power. The activists leading the cultural politics of the new regime were actually the same who had contributed to forge the new historiographical canon during the last years of Gheorghiu-Dej's regime: to mention a few examples, Leonte Răutu [Tismăneanu, Vasile, *Perfectul acrobat*, 53–54], Paul Niculescu-Mizil [Niculescu-Mizil became CC secretary in 1965. See Tismăneanu, *Stalinism for All Seasons*, cit.], and Petre Constantinescu Iaşi [Constantinescu Iaşi kept his position as president of the National Committee of Sciences from 1955 to 1974] all continued in their respective positions – together with the leadership of the Party History Institute and the Academy.

rewriting and publishing of a new historiographical canon. The need for a new synthesis of Party history was expressed in no uncertain terms by Ceaușescu at the 9th congress in 1965. This resulted in the elevation of the role of Party history in the regime's cultural politics, and in the concession of substantial resources for the renewal of the Institute into ISISP and for the investment of resources in the foundation of *Magazin Istoric* as apparently autonomous and scholarly-informed institutions – while these were in reality dominated by Party propagandists strictly supervising the work of the Party and non-Party historians. Despite the originality and skill with which national and Party history was made interesting to a wide readership in *Magazin Istoric*, it was still a narrative that closely followed the Party line. But what the general public perceived was a return of national history, not a new narrative in service of the Party as it actually was. The regime thought that it had made a good investment in terms of resources spent; economically, since it produced consistent returns, but mostly in terms of legitimacy. The journal continued to be financed even in the later years of the regime, when it had lost the majority of its readers.

In national-communism, historical knowledge was a mixture of autonomous products of authoritative scholars which used scholarly standards, and Party historical propaganda popularised by Party activists who still referred to the Marxist-Leninist doctrine in its Romanian version. The strategy devised by Gheorghiu-Dej gave priority to the non-Party cultural institutions, and reduced the importance of the Party institutions, but the leadership had in those two different sets of institutions some powerful instruments it could use to build its legitimacy domestically and abroad.

In a short period of time, Ceaușescu managed to fundamentally change the previous course. The general strategy of empowering the non-Party cultural institutions was gradually abandoned, and instead Party organizations like the Party History Institute were given increased weight. His need to create ties within the Party in order to consolidate his power made way to an intricate web of patron—client relationships. Some aspects of this change can be observed empirically: first, the continuity in the leadership of the Institute and its unaltered composition of staff, who had proved to be loyal to the Party directives; second, the substantial increase in the number of persons employed at the Institute; third, the widening of the Institute's range of competences and fields of study, and, fourth, that ISISP and its reviews were given the responsibility to reassert the primacy of Party ideology, as the new leading role of *Anale de Istorie* from 1966 and the foundation of *Magazin Istoric* demonstrates. This development represented

a break in the trend that began in the early 1960s: from a position in the wings, the Institute was now placed at centre stage.

Due to the lack of concrete evidence it is very difficult to firmly establish the direct or indirect patron—client relationships between the political leadership and the Institute's personnel. That they existed is, however, very probable. In 1965, Ceauşescu definitely needed these kinds of relationships in order to consolidate his power, and his regime continued to rest on such networking activities for the rest of its duration.

ISISP at the peak of national-communism, 1968–1974.

In 1968, the "guided liberalization" was put to an end. In order to consolidate its sovereignty, the leadership revoked the autonomy that since 1961 it had given to scholarship in creating cultural meanings. The canon elaborated by scholarship and propagandists during the previous years was at that point fixed.[1] Therefore, the Party propaganda apparatus took direct responsibility for the canon. This trend had two consequences: first, many state and Party organizations were instituted in order to have a clear leading role in the cultural and educational field; therefore, the competition for valuable scholars between institutions became more intense; second, a historiographical revision became necessary, in order to draw a line between the "new" Romania and the previous Stalinist one. ISISP was at the centre of these profound changes. How did it respond to them? How did it compete with other institutions? What did it demand from its historians, and what could it offer in return? How did ISISP carry out the historiographical revision, if at all? A set of newly accessible sources at the Romanian National Archives will help me to answer these research questions.

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[1] According to Cristian Bogdan Iacob, the process of creating the national-communist canon can be considered concluded around 1966, when the 'Romanian historiography's utopias of national salvation increasingly overlapped with Marxist-Leninist eschatology'; Iacob, *Stalinism*, 531.

7.1 From collective leadership to sultanism

7.1.1 The apotheosis of a leader: Ceauşescu
and the invasion of Czechoslovakia

Political scientist Dragoş Petrescu recently defined the year 1968 as 'a watershed in the history of communist Romania', a year whose significance can be condensed into three concepts: legitimacy, nation-building, and closure.[2] Later, the regime turned from a search for popular legitimacy towards strict control. The aim of this sub-chapter is to analyse the trajectory of the regime modality of command and to offer an explanation for the continuation of methods used in Stalinist times during national-communism, methods that guided and deeply influenced the cultural field.

Ceauşescu built his legitimacy using words such as "rights", "awakening", and "democracy"[3] – concepts with little connection to the formerly-endorsed doctrine of Marxism-Leninism. However, they were well suited to the populist rhetoric of Ceauşescu, presenting himself and the regime as *primarily Romanian rather than communist.*

As a part of this political canon, schooling years were prolonged, while the minorities and clergy were guaranteed more extensive educational rights.[4] The new Penal Code reintroduced the presumption of innocence, but also capital punishment, while parasitism and homosexual acts were criminalized.[5] But the restrictions in civil rights were not part of state propaganda. Instead, the media stressed constantly that the times were

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[2] Dragos Petrescu, *Legitimacy, Nation-Building and Closure: Meanings and Consequences of the Romanian August of 1968, in The Prague Spring and the Warsaw Pact Invasion of Czechoslovakia, 1968. Forty Years Later*, ed. M. Mark Stolarik, (Mundelein: Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers, 2010), 237–260; 237. 'The political actions taken by the Romanian communists throughout 1968 resulted in positive actions expressing consent from large segments of society, which ultimately conferred legitimacy on the single-Party rule. Nicolae Ceauşescu's gesture of defiance met with broad popular support and silenced domestic criticisms of his regime for many years. […] 1968 marked the transition from a process of "selective community-building" to a comprehensive nation-building project aimed at constructing an ethnically homogeneous Romanian "socialist" nation […] [with] enormous consequences for the further development of Ceauşescu's chauvinistic nationalism. […] 1968 marked the beginning of the end of the period of relative economic liberalization and closely watched ideological relaxation' began, according to Petrescu, 'in 1964'; ibid., 237.

[3] Ibid., 26.

[4] Silvia-Nicoleta Tudosoiu, *Educaţia în sistemul comunist din România (anii 1965–1989)*, Ph. D. dissertation (Bucharest: University of Bucharest, 2010), 42–47.

[5] Codul Penal, 21 Iunie 1968.

changing, and that Romania was able to renew itself and become an internationally respected country without the societal upheavals that were disturbing Western societies. At the same time, some minor domestic administrative and cultural innovations were designed explicitly to create the sensation of living in exciting times of change,[6] and that Romania was definitely leaving the sphere of Soviet influence, politically[7] and ideologically.[8]

After the Romanian delegation, in protest, left the Warsaw Pact conference of Budapest, which ran from 26 February to 5 March 1968, Moscow understood that it could not count on Romania. Therefore, Bucharest was not informed about the invasion that, on August 21st, half a million soldiers from the Soviet, East German, Bulgarian, and Polish armies carried out in Czechoslovakia.

The Romanian population had been told by the media that 'the Czechoslovak communists, substantially supported by the population, were determined to pursue their own, independent path towards "socialism" and that the communist parties of Bulgaria, Hungary, East Germany, Poland and the Soviet Union were not happy with that'.[9] The parallel was naturally

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[6] *RCP, Principiile de bază adoptate de plenara CC al PCR din 5–6 octombrie 1967 cu privire la îmbunătățirea organizării administrativ-teritoriale a României și sistematizarea localităților rurale*, Editura Politică, Bucharest, 1967. The Soviet-styled territorial organization, introduced in the 1950s, was substituted with the traditional Romanian administrative units, and the Mureș-Magyar Autonomous Region was dissolved by this new setting. In the meantime, identity cards, car plates, street signals, and geographical maps were changed.

[7] Charles de Gaulle visited Romania in May; Ceaușescu visited Yugoslavia in the same month. See Dragos Petrescu, *Legitimacy, Nation-Building and Closure*: 242–243. Furthermore, Prime Minister Maurer, visiting Helsinki in April, placed a wreath of flower at the base of the statue of general Gustav von Mannerheim, who was considered reactionary by the Soviets. This gesture was clearly calculated: it had previously been made by Tito, and had been included in the protocol of the visit by Ceaușescu himself. See Cezar Stanciu, 'The Common Denominator. Romania and the Nordic Countries, 1966–1969', *The Romanian Journal for Baltic and Nordic Studies* 4 (2/2012), 195–212; 205.

[8] Gheorghiu-Dej was condemned for the horrors of the Stalinist past, and was demonized almost ritually at every Party session on national and local levels; Pierre Du Bois, *Ceaușescu la putere. Anchetă asupra unei ascensiuni politice* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2008), 130–134. See also Lavinia Betea, 'Primăvara de la Praga, vara de la București', in *21 august 1968. Apoteoza lui Ceaușescu*, edited by Lavinia Betea (Iași: Polirom, 2009): 9–64.

[9] Petrescu, *Legitimacy, Nation-Building and Closure*, 244. In the newspapers, no description of the societal reaction to these changes was reported – for example, neither the *Two Thousand Words* manifesto nor the student demonstrations were reported in the press. While the other leaders of Eastern Europe started to consider the Czecho-

Romania and its new national path towards communism. Therefore, the domestic propaganda and the foreign press claimed that Romania, while invited to take part in the invasion, had refused to follow the Soviet diktat. In reality, the Romanian Party had not been informed.

The RCP's CC unanimously and immediately condemned the invasion, and a mass meeting was organized the same afternoon. That was surely the most charismatic moment of the Romanian leader, the peak of his personal capitalization of a strategy begun ten years before by his predecessor.[10] From the balcony of the CC, in front of the 100,000 people who had gathered[11] to manifest their opposition to the invasion, and in front of the television cameras, Ceaușescu denounced the Soviets openly and vibrantly.[12]

Many intellectuals and future dissidents gathered that day, protesting against the Soviet threat that could also affect Romania. They saw in Ceaușescu a honest defender of the national interest and an instigator of reforms that would modernise political and economic life, moving the country away from Stalinist and Soviet dogmatism. On that occasion and during the following days, in front of the cameras, Ceaușescu proclaimed the parallel between the political reforms implemented in Czechoslovakia and Romania[13] and called for friendship and collaboration between the socialist states.[14] Appealing to 'the comradely dialogue' as the unique method to solve controversies between communist parties, he stressed that no country should interfere with the decisions taken in another country, using both the traditional Marxist-Leninist rhetorical arsenal but also making use of concepts such as independence, sovereignty, and destiny.[15]

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slovakian Spring as a seed of counter-revolution (re-imagining Hungary in 1956), Ceaușescu and his propaganda machine presented the changes happening in Czecho-slovakia as parallel to those happening in Romania, and positively. Ibidem.

[10] Betea (ed.), *21 August 1968*; 25.

[11] The support for Ceaușescu at that historical moment is exemplified in Linz, Stepan, 206.

[12] Petrescu, *Legitimacy, Nation-Building and Closure*, 244.

[13] Nicolae Ceaușescu, *Cuvîntul tovarașului Nicolae Ceaușescu la adunarea populației din capitală în piața Palatului Republicii, in RCP, Principiile de bază ale politicii externe a României* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1968), 13.

[14] Nicolae Ceaușescu, *Declarația marii adunării naționale a Republicii Socialiste Româna cu privire la principiile de bază ale politicii externe a României, in RCP, Principiile de bază ale politicii externe a României* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1968), 25–26.

[15] 'From January to August 1968, Ceaușescu constantly referred in his speeches to Stalinist methods of mass mobilisation, "systematization" of the national territory and the return to autochthonous values in the sphere of culture'; Dragos Petrescu, *Legitimacy, Nation-Building and Closure*, 259. On the other hand, 'the societal response to Ceaușescu's speech of 21 August 1968 made clear that nationalism was a most

These new politics led Romania to the world stage, expanding its bilateral relationships with Western countries, with the dissidents inside the Soviet camp, and with the non-aligned states. On 23 August, the anniversary of the country's liberation was reorganized in order to display Romania's military force. For the first time, the newly reformed Patriotic Guards[16] marched in a parade, and the route was redirected in order to pass in front of the Soviet embassy.[17] The militarization of civic life was one of the aspects of Romanian society that the general re-establishment of the Party primacy contributed to.

7.1.2 Re-establishing Party primacy

1968 represented a peak in the Romanian strategy towards political autonomy within the communist camp, and the beginning of a process of increasing closure of the regime to the outer world, towards the sultanistic[18] involution of the regime. The tactics of power centralisation (by technocratic reforms) and the capitalization of legitimacy (by raising the nationalist tone of the propaganda) became parts of a formula that provided a different result than the previous strategy. Ceaușescu applied the teachings of Gheorghiu-Dej when manipulating the higher Party office-holders and when aiming at legitimation instead of repressing. However, the general strategy considered guided liberalization to be inefficient, and the leading role of the Party and socialist ideology in guiding the country life was once again stressed with emphasis. The three components of the new power-holder (elite manipulation, popular legitimacy, and the renewed centrality

powerful political principle that conferred legitimacy on the RCP rule in Romania. From that moment on, the RCP propaganda machine started to put much stronger emphasis on ancestors' struggle for independence and their heroic deeds'; in Dragoș Petrescu, 'Continuity, Legitimacy, and Identity: Understanding the Romanian August of 1968', *Cuadernos de Historia Contemporánea* (31/2009), 69–88; 84.

[16] Instituted originally in the last year of the war as *Formațiuni de luptă patriotice*, and disbanded in 1962 in the context of a gradual down-sizing of the military, on the eve of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia Ceaușescu reinstituted the *Gărzi patriotice*, whose first units were already marching in the parade of 23 August 1968. Vasile Buga, Petre Opriș 'Gărzile patriotice', in Dan Cătănuș (ed.), *România 1945–1989. Enciclopedia*, 291–294.

[17] Betea, *21 August 1968*, 55.

[18] Term used by Linz, Stepan, 208: 'the sultanistic regimes generally exhibit strong dynastical tendencies, for their personalism and since all the power derives from the "sultan"'.

of the Party) proceeded in parallel trajectories during the late 1960s and early 70s.

The road towards absolute power was built by reforming the political organs, and by gradually ridding them of political competitors. By 1969, collective leadership had ceased to exist. At the end of 1968, Ceauşescu succeeded in being elected as president of the newly established National Council for the Front of Socialist Unity, and in 1969 as president of the Defence Council as well as supreme commander of the army.

His opponents were politically eliminated, modifying the state and Party organization by the end of the decade.[19] The Securitate, redefined 'from sheer repression to prevention'[20] included more officers with higher education[21] and, among its reluctant collaborators, some intellectuals. Parallel to these structural changes, Ceauşescu got rid of the remaining 'Muscovites' and surrounded himself with the elite that had joined the Party in the aftermath of the Second World War, educated at the Party High School in Moscow in the 1950s.[22] At the same time, his wife Elena Petrescu worked to expand the family's influence within the Bucharest elite.[23] As a consequence of these reshufflings of power positions, the new supporters of Nicolae and Elena Ceauşescu immediately began to promote a personality cult of the leader. This process would later make the idiosyncrasies of the leader increasingly central in the regime's ideology, and he would eventually become the leading force in cultural politics.

The 10th Congress stressed the importance of the flourishing of the nation as the basic condition for the creation of a 'multilaterally developed society', a vague concept where the state, Party, and masses collaborate under the

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[19] In 1969, he managed to change the statutes of the Party (art. 18, letter D) in order to confer to the Congress, a larger and more controllable body, the power to elect the general secretary, removing this power from the CC where most of his opponents were still delegates. Sixty of the old comrades were not re-elected to the CC, while central Party organs were enlarged (the Executive Political Committee increased from 15 to 21 members, the CC from 120 to 165); Pierre Du Bois, *Ceauşescu la putere. Anchetă asupra unei ascensiuni politice* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2008), 140–142. See also Linz, Stepan, 207.

[20] Petrescu, *Legitimacy, Nation-Building and Closure*, 257.

[21] Petrescu, *Continuity, Legitimacy, and Identity*, 75.

[22] Betea, *Viaţa lui Ceauşescu*, 367. Those who obtained power and positions were Ilie Verdeţ, Paul Niculescu-Mizil, Virgil Trofin, Ion Stănescu, Ion Iliescu, Gheorghe Pană, Dumitru Popescu, Janos Fazekas, and Ion Ioniţă, while those who had strong ties with Moscow were dismissed: Ghizela Vass, Sorin Toma, Chivu Stoica, Valter Roman, C. Pârvulescu, Alexandru Moghioroş, Iosif Chişinevschi, and Alexandru Bârladeanu.

[23] She insisted on granting privileges to the wives or widows of veterans; Tismăneanu, *Stalinism for All Seasons*, 204–205.

guidance of the Party towards socialism.[24] The Aristotelian common good was no longer the responsibility of the sovereign Party, but of all the Romanian people.[25] This Foucaultian process of politicization of life went along with the realization of the total domination of the population described by Hannah Arendt:[26] Ceauşescu stressed in the same speech that the socialist education of the masses should be strengthened.[27] This meant that the regime reiterated its ideological discourse and its application in scholarly culture, popular culture, and propaganda.[28] Regarding social science and the humanities in particular, Ceauşescu underlined the importance of scientific and scholarly debate, but stressed that it was necessary to 'remove the fragmentation of research forces, to ensure the unitary guidance and orientation of this fundamental problematic of social life, of contemporary thought, in order to increase the contribution of the social sciences to the general activity of the Party'.[29]

The state and Party organizations assumed an increasingly central role in the development of cultural activities, while the collaboration with the intellectuals turned into their co-option into Party institutions under the

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[24] Nicolae Ceauşescu, *Raportul Comitetului Central al Partiului Comunist Român cu privire la activitatea PCR în perioda dintre Congresul al IX lea şi Congresul al X-lea şi sarcinile de viitor ale partidului, in RCP, Congresul X-lea* (Bucharest, Editura Politică, 1969), 57.

[25] Ibid., 61: 'For the development of socialist democracy […] an inseparable part of socialist democracy is the growth of the spirit of civic response, the strengthening of the conscience of the duties of everybody to consecrate their strength, capacity, and competence to the common good, to the general interests of the nation'.

[26] Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 132.

[27] Ceauşescu, *Raportul*, 71: 'one of the principal tasks of our ideological front is to promote a combative and militant attitude against retrograde and mystical conceptions, against the influence of foreign ideology, against the retrograde mentalities'. This regimentation was favoured by the institution of the Socialist Unity Front, an organization that allowed the Party to take direct control of the collective life of everyone over 18; Tismăneanu, *Stalinism for All Seasons*, 206. At the same time, Ceauşescu wanted to reduce the influence of the Romanian Unit of Radio Free Europe, defined by Paul Niculescu-Mizil as conducting 'hostile activity against the Romanian state'[Betea, *Viață lui Ceauşescu*, 373]. Radio Free Europe was appreciated for the quality of its information, but also for the fact that it broadcast popular music from the West.

[28] Ibidem: 'the role of propaganda work is to stimulate the living political thought of human beings, to help them understand the development of events and to adopt a correct position in their respect, to acquire a clear perspective on the basis of the Marxist-Leninist conception of the development of contemporary society, to participate actively in the performance of the internal and external politics of the Party and the government'.

[29] Ibid., 70–71.

leading role of the propagandists. The most relevant changes in state and Party organizations for the humanities and social sciences were made in 1970, with the forming of the Academy for Socio-Political Sciences. This was a Party umbrella organization directing the work of all the institutes for the humanities across Romania (but not including ISISP, which remained under the direct control of the CC).

During this period of time, the regime strove to eliminate the distinction between propaganda and culture, and education in effect became political education.[30] The enunciations that later became a symbol of the regime's ideological twist towards cultural regimentation were the so-called "July theses", a short document of 17 paragraphs that Ceauşescu presented in July 1971 to the Executive Committee. The document asserted that 'the educational-political activity constitutes an inseparable component of the work of construction of our social order, a concern of primary importance for the Party and the state'. Ceauşescu proposed 17 measures 'to increase the political-ideological activity, for the Marxist-Leninist education of the members of the Party, for all the workers'.[31] The national audience perceived this turn[32] as a clear change compared to previous cultural politics: the control and direct guidance of the Party in the orientation of political-educational activities was promoted openly.[33] It was with this document that the Academy for Socio-Political Sciences acquired primacy in the cultural field (specified in paragraph eight in the document).

Despite being a manifesto of the forthcoming cultural ice-age, the July theses were neither the first nor the final standpoint of this trend. In fact, in December 1967 the Party formed the Ideological Commission of the CC, which already at that time spelled out the main tenets of the July theses.[34]

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[30] Vasile, *Viața intelectuală și artistică*, 180.

[31] Ceauşescu, *Propuneri de masuri pentru imbunatatirea activitatii politico-ideologice,de educare marxist-leninista a membrilor de partid, a tuturor oamenilor muncii – 6 iulie 1971* (Bucharest, Editura Politică, 1971), 7–8. These measures were deemed necessary to 'increase the level of revolutionary combativeness and of the militant, partisan spirit in every communist, political, ideological and educational aspect […] in the mass and Party organizations, in the state organizations, in the ideological and cultural-artistic propaganda institutes' (Ibid., 8).

[32] Tismăneanu, *Prefață*, in Vasile, *Viață intelectuală,* 11: 'the "July 1971 theses" remained in the traumatized collective memory of the Romanian intellectuality'.

[33] Ceauşescu, *Propuneri de masuri*, 8: in order to fight 'against the influences of bourgeois origin, against the retrograde mentalities, foreign to the principles of communist ethic and to the Party spirit', something that was absent from the rhetoric of the years 1965–1968.

[34] Vasile, *Viață intelectuală*, 25–26.

Later, in 1969, the 10th Congress of the Party acknowledged the decisive shift in the regime towards cultural regimentation, nationalism, and personality cult,[35] making, as an editorial in *România Literară* stated, 'thought and human sensitivity […] a state problem'.[36] However, these changes were in practice implemented some years later, between 1972 and 1974.[37]

The dramatic implementation of legislative measures, institutional changes, and power centralisation were completed in 1974, the year when national-communism became officially the main pillar of state and Party policy. The period after 1974 was characterised by uniformity, homogeneity, and unitary norms, both in terms of political practice and legislative action.[38] In 1973–74, the regime passed laws to centralise and regiment educational institutions, cultural centres, clubs, libraries, museums, musical institutes, and theatres. In 1974, the Constitution was modified, creating the new office of President of the Republic. The State Council

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[35] 'In August 1969, the Report to the 10th Congress of the RCP contains *in nuce* the directives of a strictly-centralised vision on culture: the part of the report dedicated to political and ideological education mentions without ambiguity the necessity of a centralised conduction of cultural life, of the reform of the educational system in accordance with the new ideological conception of the Party, [and] the intention to reform, according to these political criteria, the domain of social sciences'; Pavelescu, *Colivia de catifea*, VIII.

[36] Quoted in Macrea-Toma, *Privilighenția*, 178.

[37] Some scholars present the July theses as a consequence of the positive impression that Ceaușescu had received of the propaganda apparatus during his visit to China and North Korea in June 1971: Thomas Kunze, *Nicolae Ceaușescu. O biografie* (Bucharest: Editura Vremea, 2002), 238–239; Adrian Cioroianu, *Ce Ceaușescu qui hante les Roumaines. Le mythe, les representations et le culte du Dirigeant dans la Roumanie communiste* (Bucharest: Editura Curtea Veche, 2004), 74–78; quoted in Pavelescu, *Colivia de catifea*, VIII. See also Tismăneanu, *Stalinism for all Seasons*, 206; Stan, *Istorie și politică*, 267–268. Former political higher office-holders, on the contrary, consider the July theses as a direct consequence of domestic politics: see Rodica Culcer, *Culpe care nu se iută. Convorbiri cu Cornel Burtică* (Bucharest: Editura Curtea Veche, 2001), 100–103; Dumitru Popescu, *Am fost și cioplitor de himere* (Bucharest: Editura Express, 1994), 197–201; quoted in Pavelescu, *Colivia de catifea*, VIII. The debate on the "originality" of the July theses began during the Ceaușescu era: the archival documents tell us that Ceaușescu defended his paternity of the idea before the Executive Committee; in his own words, 'what I have seen in China and Korea, in any case, is the living proof that the conclusion we reached is the right one. […] Before going abroad I was at a meeting at the Secretariat and there we decided to prepare the material for the plenary session […]. I have said that before going to China'; ANIC, CC al PCR, Cancelarie, 72/1971, ff. 10–58: *Minutes of the Executive Committee of the meeting of the CC, 25th July 1971*, quoted in Francesco Zavatti, *Comunisti per caso. Regime e consenso in Romania durante e dopo la Guerra fredda*, Mimesis, Milan, 2014, 121 n18.

[38] Vasile, *Viață intelectuală*, 159.

functions were reduced to mere choreographic formalities,[39] while all its important functions were taken over by the office of the president, who as Head of State represented the state power both domestically[40] and in international relations. In a ceremony that closely resembled a royal coronation, Ceauşescu was elected President of Romania shortly afterwards. This meant that Ceauşescu now, together with his close allies, wielded undisputed power, while the importance of the state and Party legislatures was drastically reduced.

The definitive formalization of national-communism in the state structure was corroborated by the ideological innovations introduced in the 1974 Party program.[41] Labelled *The RCP Program to Favour the Socialist Multilaterally Developed Society and the Road of Romania towards Communism*,[42] it contained a 38-page long history of Romania.[43] This document stressed the importance, in the creation of the new man, of literature and art in a strict relationship with social and national evolution, with themes inspired by the ideals of socialism and communism. With this document, the regime sought to eradicate all forms of spontaneity in intellectual production. The guided liberalization had turned socialist Romania into a rigidly regimented neo-Stalinist dictatorship, which fully endorsed an anti-intellectual tendency.[44]

[39] The Epoch Times România, 'Retrospectivă constituţională privind funcţia de preşedinte', *The Epoch Times România*, 25-10-2009, available on http://epochtimes-romania.com/news/retrospectiva-constitutionala-privind-functia-de-presedinte---62116
[40] The President of the Republic was also made supreme commander of the army, president of the defence council, president of the State Council and the council of the ministers, with power to nominate and dismiss, on the suggestion of the prime minister, vice-prime ministers, ministers, and presidents of the other central organs of state administration. Ibidem.
[41] According to historian Cristian Vasile, the program was 'a sort of constitution of the Communist Party, complementary to the 1965 constitution'.Vasile, *Viaţă intelectuală,* 162.
[42] Dragos Petrescu, 'Historical Myths, Legitimating discourses, and identity politics in Ceauşescu's Romania', *East European Perspectives*, 6 (7/2004), available on http://www.rferl.org/content/article/1342455.html, accessed on 16-04-2014. See also Petrescu, 'The Alluring Facet of Ceauşescu-ism: Nation-Building and Identity Politics in Communist Romania, 1965–1989', *New Europe College Yearbook* 11 (2003–2004), 241–272.
[43] RCP, *Programul Partidului Comunist Roman de faurire a societatii socialiste multilateral dezvoltate si inaintare a Romaniei spre comunism* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1975), 27–64.
[44] Vasile, *Viaţă intelectuală*, 182.

7.2 Culture as Party politics and its consequences for history discipline

The authoritarian involution of the regime had a dramatic effect on the organization of academic work, which was subordinated to the leadership of the Party and forced to fit with *one single* comprehensive project of humanist research endorsed by the regime, in an attempt to rationalize the existing resources and eliminate any kind of ambiguity and individuality from research. How did this reorganization take place in general, and for ISISP in particular, and how did it influence the power balance between Bucharest's different history-writing institutions?

In May 1969, the General Bureau for Press and Publishing prepared a review on the state of history-writing in Romania, focusing on the works printed between 1966 and 1968.[45] The report summarized the perceived major problem – the 'incorrect way of treating some problems' – of homeland history.[46] The Party historiographical canon decided by the 10th Congress, it was alleged,[47] was not followed by the historians regarding the re-editing of older works.[48] Furthermore, the workers' movement's history was wrongly and negatively portrayed.[49] In general, the report castigated what were seen as too uncritical presentations of previous bourgeois political figures, the unduly low appreciation of the history of the workers' movement in homeland history, and also the 'political opportunism' of some publications.[50] This was, according to the report, the result of the 'exclusively eulogistic reconsideration of some historians of the past'[51] by some contemporary historians. With the gradual return of the leading role of the Party in the cultural field during the early Ceauşescu period, the counter-attack of the Party propagandists characterised these positive evaluations as 'uncritical and objectivist'.[52] Furthermore, the report signalled that intellectuals should not be free to publish their opinions on sensitive topics.

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[45] ANIC, Comitetul pentru Presă şi Tipărituri, 17/1969, ff. 139–148, published in Pavelescu, Dumitru (ed.), *PCR şi intelectualii,* 247–252.
[46] Ibid., 247.
[47] Ibid., 249.
[48] For example, the report indicated that King Carol I and Ferdinand of Hohenzollern were presented as benefactors and heroes of the Romanian people. Ibidem.
[49] Ibid., 250.
[50] Ibid., 251.
[51] Ibid., 249.
[52] Ibid., 248.

Publishing on historical controversies was risky for the regime: only the Party could decide what messages should be spread.[53]

As we have seen, in the early 1960s the historians had received a wide mandate and Party authorization to do research on Romanian history. The Party leadership chose to rely on the authority of the scholars in order to build its own legitimacy. But, since the historical findings were contradictory or politically compromising for the constantly changing Party official rhetoric, and produced no or very little legitimacy, in 1969–70 that authorization was largely withdrawn. Instead, a specific national research program was launched which monopolized the allocation of resources. Outside this program, there was no financing, no possibilities of publication, and no access to academic positions. Therefore, scholarly autonomy was virtually eradicated once more, as in 1948, and the historiographical canon became the discourse on the Aristotelian common good as incarnated by the Party.

7.2.1 The rationalization of the social sciences under Party supervision

As shown previously, the regime decided to establish firm control over the cultural field. It re-distributed power and resources between the state and Party institutes for historical research, but how? Of fundamental importance for answering this question, it is necessary to investigate the foundation of the *Academia de Ştiinţe Sociale şi Politice* (ASSP), and the consequent gradual decline of the Romanian Academy. The foundation of the ASSP and the decline of the Academy are largely neglected topics in previous research, except for the memoirs and some published documents.

Once the Party leadership had understood that the cultural politics could not be led by the non-Party intellectuals (see chapter 7), the question was how to better distribute the available human resources. The solution was found in the creation of an institution that could rationalize those resources while avoiding dispersion or "contradictory" results from some intellectuals. In 1969, the Propaganda Section organized the most far-reaching reorganization of social sciences and humanities in communist Romania,

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[53] The report indicated that some publications made references to Romanian or neighbours' territories, claiming their contentiousness in history. Those references were considered 'dangerous, since they were disregarding the repercussions […] on the actual relationships with our territorial neighbours'. Ibid., 251–252.

asserting that 'scholarly research in the domain of the social sciences is not developed at a desirable level and according to available means […] both from the point of view of problems studied and the way of organizing and developing scholarly research'.[54]

According to the Propaganda Section, the scholarly research institutes and their cadres could not initiate 'investigations capable of offering answers to the major problems of life'.[55] The main target of this manoeuvre was the Academy.[56] The Propaganda Section attacked the historical research of the Academy with clearly inconsistent arguments, namely that some vaguely-specified historical topics had not been developed. To underpin its claim, the Propaganda Section used the plea for universal history invoked by Oțetea to Ceaușescu in 1968 – but this time, in order to remove from the Academy the patronage of historical research.

Using the rationalization argument, the entire sector of social sciences and humanities was reformed under the leadership of a new institution, the Academy of Socio-Political Sciences (*Academia de Științe Social-Politice*). This happened under the direct supervision of the Central Committee of the Party. In 1970, the year of its foundation, it included 125 members and 93 correspondent members in eight disciplines (political economy, economy, philosophy and logic, history and archaeology, juridical sciences, sociology, theory and history of art and literature).[57] Historians and the Party-propagandists-turned-historians were given important positions within the ASSP.[58] In 1970 it included 17 research centres that had pre-

[54] ANIC, Popescu-Puțuri Familial Fund, 54, *Propuneri cu privire la îmbunătățirea îndrumării activității în domeniul științelor sociale și crearea Academiei de Științe Sociale* [*Proposals regarding improvements to be made in the domain of social sciences and the creation of the Academy of Social Sciences*], ff. 48–59, f. 48.
[55] Ibid., f. 49.
[56] The Romanian Academy had under its patronage 22 institutions with 837 researchers, a total of 1,250 employees and a budget of 29.5 million Lei per year. Ibid., ff. 48–49.
[57] Florin-Răzvan Mihai, 'Academia de Științe Sociale și Politice a Republicii Socialiste România', in *România 1945–1989. Enciclopedia regimului communist. Instituții de partid, de stat, obștești și cooperativiste*, ed. Dan Cătănuș (Bucharest: Institutul Național Pentru Studiul Totalitarismului, 2012), 17–20, 17.
[58] Sociologist and once Party History Institute adjunct director Miron Constantinescu was made president (from 1970 to 1973). Of the seven vice-presidents, three were historians: Constantin Daicoviciu, former rector of the Babeș-Bolyai University (Cluj), and two veterans, Ladislau Banyai and Ștefan Voicu, [Opriș, *Tentativă de fraudă,* cit.; Ștefanescu, *Enciclopedia,* 44, entry "Banyai, Ladislau"] while historians Carol Göllner and Mircea Petrescu-Dîmbovița and veterans Tudor Bugnariu and I. Popescu-Puțuri represented 4/10 of the members [Ștefanescu, *Enciclopedia,* 16; 270, entry "Popescu-Puțuri, Ion"]. The presidency of the history and archaeology section was given to

viously belonged to the Romanian Academy.[59] The members were simply transferred *in toto* from the institutions of the Romanian Academy to ASSP, as prescribed by the Work Law. For the Romanian Academy this meant a period of decline,[60] and it deteriorated gradually during the coming years[61] due to the anti-intellectual tendency promoted by the regime.

ISISP remained under the direct control of the CC, while the Iorga Institute became a unit of the new Academy, with its research plans coordinated by the ASSP, which in two years became 'a Party and state organ, under the direction of the CC of the RCP'.[62] In practice, the new regimentation of the Iorga Institute meant the realization of the Party plan of control. What needs to be stressed here is that the process of co-option of the intellectuals by the Party was substituted by the insertion of entire state-run scholarly organizations *into* the Party.

historian Ştefan Ştefanescu, who graduated in history from Moscow in 1957, and who was a researcher at the Iorga Institute and from that year its director, replacing Andrei Oţetea [ibid., 317, entry "Ştefănescu, Ştefan"].

[59] These institutes were the Institute of Philosophy, the Juridical Research Institute, the Centre for Sociological Research, the Institute of Psychology, the N. Iorga History Institute, the Archaeology Institute, the South-East European Studies Institute, the Centre of Logic, the Institute of Literary History and Theory, the Art History Institute, the A. D. Xenopol History and Archaeology Institute, and five minor centres in Cluj, Iaşi, Craiova, and Târgu Mureş. Two new institutes were created to incorporate other Romanian Academy institutes within the new Academy: the Institute of Political Economy and History of the Economic Thought, and the National Centre for Sociology. The Romanian Academy (Academia RSR) continued to be responsible for the Institute of Linguistics, the Institute of Ethnology and Folklore, the Centre of Phonetic and Dialects Research, the Centre of History, Philology, and Ethnography of Craiova, the Centre of Linguistics, Literary History, and Folklore of Iaşi, the Institute of Linguistics and Literary History of Cluj. ANIC, Popescu-Puţuri Family archive, 54, f. 55.

[60] Vasile, *Viaţă intelectuală*, 182.

[61] After the foundation of the new Academy, the Romanian Academy included only 76 members and 126 correspondents; by 1973, their numbers had fallen to 62 members and 116 correspondents. In 1974, under the pretext of introducing Elena Ceauşescu as a member of the Academy, 33 new members and 36 new correspondents were accepted. Later on, no more new members were accepted, with the exception of Ceauşescu, who in 1985 was elected as a full member and honorary president. Since the recruitment of new members was halted and the older academics gradually died away, by 1989 the Academy had been reduced to a mere 34 members and 59 correspondents; Dan Cătănuş (ed.), *România 1945–1989. Enciclopedia*, 20–34, entry "Academia R. P. Române / R. S. România".

[62] ANIC, CC al PCR – Secţia Cancelarie, 11/1976, ff. 1–7: *Nota cu privire la îmbunatăţirea organizării şi activităţii Academiei de Ştiinţe Sociale şi Politice*, f. 1.

7.2.2 A new competitor in the field of history: the Centre for Studies and Research on Military History and Theory

At the peak of the regime's popularity, in August 1968, the propaganda efforts were no longer limited to attracting the people to the Party, but extended to the development of a national military doctrine meant to cement the link between the people, the Party, and the army. This was a line of propaganda that Ceaușescu defined as a "doctrine for homeland defence by the entire people", a notion previously theorized and experimented with by Tito in Yugoslavia during the Second World War, when fighting against the German invasion.[63] In the new international situation, with open Romanian disobedience against Moscow, the new strategy was not aimed at discouraging NATO, but was rather meant as a deterrent against a possible Soviet invasion. More than a concrete military strategy, it was a new ideological standpoint of the regime,[64] implemented by means of the resurrection of a paramilitary Party organization, the Patriotic Guards, by increased production of heavy weaponry for the military,[65] and also by a mobilisation of propaganda efforts at the cultural level.

Until then, Party interest in military history had primarily been met by the ISISP special section for military history. In addition to this section, which was rather limited in its competences and potential, the panorama of military historiography in Romania also comprised various military research sections (like the Section of Historical Studies at the Army Headquarters) and journals where the theory for homeland defence was developed (like *Problems of Military Art*), and finally at the Military Academy, where courses in military history and theory were taught to future officers.

In November 1968, the Secretariat of the CC decided to create the Centre of Research for Military Theory and History, under the supervision of the minister of Defence, 'in order to develop the scientific research in the domain of military history and theory'.[66] Opened in October 1969, the new institute

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[63] Stan, *Istorie și politică*, 302.
[64] Andrei Miroiu, Simona Soare, *Politica de Securitate a României 1878–2006. O perspectivă istorică*, in Luciana A. Ghica, Marian Zulean (eds.), *Politică de securitate națională. Concepte, instituții, procese*, Polirom, Iași, 2007, 149–170, 162.
[65] Alexandru Caravan, 'Tancul românescu – O istorie', *Buletin de Teorie Militară* 1 (5/2010).
[66] Decision of the CC of the RCP, n. 2033, 20 November 1968.

was composed of a mixture of military officers and historians.[67] The Centre, during its initial years, edited collections of documents on the military history of the Romanian people, the first two volumes appearing in 1974.[68]

The Centre succeeded in attracting some ISISP researchers during its building up phase: Gheorghe Al. Savu (formerly employed at *Magazin Istoric*), Petre Ilie, who after 12 years as a main researcher at ISISP was offered the post of section head at the Centre,[69] and Constantin Căzăni-steanu, who was assigned the task of editing the collection *Documents on the Military History of the Romanian People* (*Documente privind istoria militară a poporului roman*). In the same manner as at ISISP, many young researchers at the Centre wrote pieces on military history but allowed them to be published under the name of a more powerful character – in this case, Ilie Ceauşescu.[70] He personally tried to recruit several researchers at ISISP to the Centre due to their special competences.[71]

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[67] Its personnel comprised 52 employees: three generals, 35 officers, one sub-officer, and 13 civilians. Its first director was Eugen Bantea, former director of Editura Militară, while Mihai Ioan, former editor of the journal *Apărarea patriei* (*Defend the Homeland*), was nominated editor of the review. During the first years, the Centre was able to attract many historians from the ranks of other state and Party institutions – for example Leonida Loghin from the Section for Historical Studies of the Military Headquarter, Traian Grozea from *Problems of Military Art*, and Gheorghe Romanescu, Iani Bela and Silvestru Porembski from the Military Academy. Information on the Centre is available on the website of the its successor, the Institute for Political Studies of Defence and Military History: http://www.mapn.ro/diepa/ispaim/istoric.html The Centre has survived the regime shift, despite changing its name several times: in 1991 as the Institute for Military History and Theory, in 1994 as the Institute of Operative-Strategic Studies and Military History; in 1997 it assumed its present name. Most of its previous collaborators are still enrolled in the present Institute. It was composed of a section on military history divided into three sub-sections (for ancient and medieval, modern, and contemporary history), and a section for the study of military doctrine and theory (divided into two sub-sections: military science and arts, and military doctrine). It was provided with a library and a documentation centre. The Centre also published a journal, *Review of Military History and Theory*. Ibidem.
[68] Căzănisteanu (ed.), *Documente privind istoria militară a poporului român* (Bucharest: Editura Militară, Vol. I, 1974; Vol. II, 1974; Vol. III, 1975; Vol. IV, 1975; Vol. V, 1976; Vol. VI, 1980; Vol. VII, 1986).
[69] Ştefanescu, *Enciclopedia,* 176, entry "Ilie, Petre".
[70] Ilie Ceauşescu, brother of the Party leader, was an officer who had graduated from the Military Political Faculty of the Military Academy in 1959 and the holder of a doctoral degree in history gained in 1968. After teaching history at the Military Academy between 1958 and 1970, he became main scientific researcher at the Centre in 1970 [Stefanescu, 88, entry "Ceauşescu, Ilie"] and head of the history section in 1977.
[71] Ion Bulei remembers that, in 1973, while employed at ISISP, he was called by Ilie Ceauşescu who wanted to employ him at the Centre, with a higher salary, but he declined. Interview by the author with Ion Bulei, 12th February 2013.

Due to his family ties with the leader, Ilie Ceauşescu could develop the research of the Centre with almost complete autonomy in the choice of personnel and research subjects.[72] His brother, who obviously trusted him, let him develop military history in a way that developed the theory of the doctrine of homeland defence by the entire people. His ascension in 1977 to the position of director of the Centre signalled that his brother supported his endeavours. The Centre started, from 1974, to develop a wide range of international scholarly contacts due to its participation in the International Commission of Military History. From 1977 to 1989, as we will see, Ilie Ceauşescu was able to attract a number of persons and substantial resources to the Centre in order to publish general volumes on the military history of the Romanian people, and also to use the Centre for spreading proto-chronist ideas. But was ISISP equally successful in this competition for human and material resources?

7.3 Attracting competences. Privileges and their rewards

7.3.1 Avant-garde for the Party, politruci for others

According to Florin Constantiniu, the Party History Institute was perceived by the Party as a sort of pioneer of Romanian historiography.[73] The Party viewed the new history from a teleological perspective – history as a sequence of events that had led to communism and the abolition of the old bourgeois-reactionary culture; consequently, the 'correct' history could be written only by the Party and its activists, who had the sufficient ideological preparation to infuse Marxist-Leninist theory into historical writing. For example, Constantiniu remembers that the majority of the historians at the Institute were 'selected primarily on dossier criteria', i.e. according to their proven loyalty to the Party or due to their working class / poor peasant background, even though he admits that sometimes these criteria also allowed the recruitment of 'serious researchers'.[74] His general assessment of the collective at the Institute is clearly negative: 'those at the Party History Institute figured as the cardinals in front of the King's musketeers',[75] he

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[72] Stan, *Istorie şi politică în România comunista*, 301–302.
[73] Constantiniu, *De la Răutu si Roller*, 132.
[74] Ibidem.
[75] Ibidem.

wrote in his memoir, recalling the famous historical novel by Alexander Dumas. This image continued to be attached to the Institute historians when it started to expand its ranks with competent historians. Still in the late 1960s, the Iorga Institute's historians called depreciatively *politruci* the Institute's historians and activists.[76]

Between the Institute and the general community of historians there was a definite rivalry, expressed in a number of accusations from the Iorga historians against their colleagues at the Institute: they criticized their lack of professional preparation, and questioned their more substantial research resources and material advantages. According to Academy historian Apostol Stan, 'frustration' is what better characterised the community of historians in connection to the Institute.[77] The collaborations and contacts with the Institute were tense, often mixed with sourness and mockery.

What the memoirs of the historians primarily point out as a reason for conflict was the low level of academic education among the ISISP historians. In this regard, the legacy of Mihail Roller lasted long in the Institute even after his departure; his legacy of incompetence, arrogance and despotism was still remembered among the historians, and the concrete remnants of his previous domination in the field were the historians whom he had personally selected and who were still active within the Institute.[78]

The conflict between the ISISP and non-ISISP historians remained fixed in collective memory, recalling, by juxtaposition, the dichotomy nation versus Party. In the widespread current opinion of the historians, the "Party historians" were considered incompetent activists, and they maintained that defending professional standards was a duty that corresponded with the defence of the nation and its history.[79]

Professionally, for the historians it was insulting to have their work reviewed by a colleague at ISISP: "What do they [pretend to] know?"' was the common verdict.[80] In addition, the Party History Institute historians

[76] The definition of *politruc* is multiple: 'political activist', 'political instructor in the Soviet army', 'representative of the Communist Party in a domain, that guards the respect of the application of the principles and the interests of the Party'. Source: www.dexonline.ro/definitie/politruc

[77] Apostol Stan, *Istorie şi politică*, 102.

[78] See, i.e., Georgescu, *Tot un fel de istorie,* 221 ss.

[79] According to Apostol Stan, historian at the History Institute of the Academy, 'the antipathy of the researchers of the Academy was determined also by the fact that the Party History Institute was a centre of falsification of history and a guardian of the entire historiography'; Stan, *Istorie şi politică*, 102.

[80] Constantiniu, 132.

were perceived as both dishonest and wielders of the odious power of censorship.[81] Furthermore, the ISISP historians were perceived as the *longa manus* of the Party on the matter of scholarly autonomy. The historians could not refuse to collaborate with them, but neither could they base their arguments on scholarly criteria.[82]

It was well-known that at the Institute a cohort of ghost-writers barred from publishing under their own names were instead writing for the directors, while compensated at least partly by material gains.[83] The Party historians were used as ghost-writers both for individual works of the higher propagandists like Popescu-Puțuri,[84] Mircea Mușat,[85] and Ion Ardeleanu,[86] and for the most important works that appeared following Party decisions.[87] These practices, which also spread to other history-writing

[81] 'Censorship […] is exercised by some so-called uncultivated experts, lacking even a minimal degree of specialization, invidious, overambitious, vengeful against valuable and original authors'; Stan, 102.

[82] Papacostea recollects that the Iorga Institute had to collaborate with the Party History Institute for the production of a synthesis of Romanian history in the 1980s. On this occasion, the members of the two institutes clashed many times, arriving at the point that the Iorga historians expressed their wish to refuse future collaboration [Interview with Șerban Papacostea]. Despite this, the Iorga historians continued to work on the joint project since they had no real choice. However, in the end the opposition became so intense that the Party had to cancel the whole project; Papacostea, *Captive Clio*, 198.

[83] 'At the Party History Institute […] existed a group of researchers who, even if kept in the shadows, were satisfied by a number of privileges'; ibid., 103.

[84] On the practice of ghost-writing, Titu Georgescu recollects that Ion Popescu-Puțuri, well before the Trachomania during the 1970s, asked him to write an article on the Pelasgians, an obscure pre-Dacian autochthonous population, an article that Puțuri published under his own name; Georgescu, *Tot un fel de istorie*, 264.

[85] Mircea Mușat was a key figure in the Ceaușescu era historiography. Having graduated in history from the Faculty of Bucharest, at the end of the 1960s he was recruited for a Ph. D. at the Ștefan Gheorghiu Party High School. Subsequently, he became chancellor at the Propaganda Section of the CC. From that position, he blackmailed and forced other historians to provide him with texts that he could publish in his own name. See Stan, 295–296.

[86] Ion Bulei told me: 'I usually wrote very fast when I was writing for others […]. I wrote, [for] two of them, [Mircea] Mușat and [Ion] Ardeleanu. Among other tasks and positions within ISISP, they also worked for the CC, and were in charge of controlling what was published, and when you wanted to publish you had to go to them, they gave you the permission, and considered if your work should be published […]. I wrote for them, not much [but I did], and they published in their own name' Interview with Ion Bulei, 12th February 2013. Ion Ardeleanu was the closest partner of Mircea Mușat. Their names are often associated in previous research. See, i.e., Constantiniu, 293–295; Stan, *Istorie și politică,* 295–296.

[87] When I asked Ion Bulei who had written the famous 38-page synthesis of Romanian history appearing in the preamble to the 1974 Party Program, to my great surprise he

institutions,[88] were perceived as disqualifying marks for the Party History Institute and its historians.[89]

In some cases, the incompetence of the Party History Institute historians became a widespread notion. Radio Free Europe made frequent allusions, during the last decade of the regime, to the megalomaniac personality cult that surrounded the figure of Ceauşescu with full support from the Party History Institute historians.[90] The exaggerations of the last decade of the Ceauşescu regime would have been merely comical if there had not also been a repressive component.[91] The Party historians had their productions

told me, trying to remember, 'I think that I also wrote part of it…'". Interview with Ion Bulei, 12th February 2013.

[88] Stan, *Istorie şi politică*, 102.

[89] Medieval historian Şerban Papacostea, researcher at the Academy Institute, told me: 'I had no contact with those people, and avoided them as much as possible. […] Not all of them were bad historians, but many of them contributed to the falsification [of history] according to the conception of the Party, in the interest of the totalitarian Party. […] I had several contacts with them only when they meddled with my works, to change them in the sense they wanted – nationalist exaltation – I refused to accept this meddling'. Interview with Şerban Papacostea by the author.

[90] One further example is the case of *Scorniceşti. Vatră de istorie românească* (*Scorniceşti. Heart of Romanian History*), a book written by Party historian and Propaganda Section member Ion Spălătelu. Ion Spălătelu, *Scorniceşti. Vatră de istorie românească* (Bucharest: Ed. Albatros, 1983). Spălătelu claimed that Scorniceşti, the birthplace village of Nicolae Ceauşescu, was also the birthplace of the Dacians. The assumption was based on the "empirical evidence" that 'the men of Scorniceşti were hardworking, smart, with broad foreheads, and of average height' [Radu Filipescu, Octavian Manea 'La revedere, Europa Libera!' *Revista 22*, 12 August 2008, available at http://www.revista22.ro/la-revedere--bbc-si-europa-libera-4746.html]. The book eventually reached the international public, among them Monica Lovinescu, a journalist at Radio Free Europe, who wrote a very scathing review of it. According to historian Sorin Antohi, the laughter was so loud and widespread in Romania that the Party decided to withdraw the book from all bookshops and libraries. In 1983, shortly after the *Scorniceşti affaire*, the Securitate decided to shut down *Dialog*, the student journal of the University of Iaşi. Some *securişti*, among them Spălătelu, wanted to speak directly with its editor-in-chief, Sorin Antohi, who recollected: 'one of the accusations when they shut down our journal was that we were very favourably treated in the reviews by Radio Free Europe, and the suspicion was that we were sending our own writings abroad – and this was actually the case, it was true. But I told him: "*Tovaraş* Spălătelu, do you think that everything that these guys review is sent to their office?" and he had just had his own book reviewed. And he said "no, no, of course not"' [Interview with Sorin Antohi by the author].

[91] Dissident Radu Filipescu had recorded the broadcast by Monica Lovinescu and listened to it together with some friends. Arrested for having made a protest appeal against Ceauşescu, the charges against him included the possession of the tape with the broadcast, found by the Securitate in his apartment. *Revista* 22, 'La revedere, Europa Libera!', cit. See also Arch Puddington, *Broadcasting Freedom. The Cold War Triumph of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2000), 239; Ion Mihai Pacepa, *Red Horizons: Chronicles of a Communist Spy Chief*

spread by the propaganda channels, and they safeguarded from criticism by the Securitate.[92]

These were the main reasons why the Party History Institute historians were considered as propagandists by the Iorga Institute's historians. With such a poor reputation among the historians, the question must be asked: how did ISISP manage to attract young recruits?

7.3.2 Attracting competences with material goods and privileges

By preventing freedom of thought, authoritarian regimes oblige citizens either to adhere to or to refuse the logic imposed, with no possible third option.[93] Being a member of the Party represented a definite choice, one that included a person in a universe of norms, obligations, and privileges. If one decided to join the Communist Party, his or her dossier at the Securitate was destroyed – at least, theoretically.[94] This was one of the important advantages of joining the Party, while those who chose to remain outside could be controlled and persecuted without any form of protection.[95]

Repression was certainly an issue that drew a dividing line between Party and non-Party historians. The historians who did not answer the call to become Party members share a collective history of resistance to the interference of politics in professional and private life.[96] They clearly per-

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(Washington: Regnery Publishing, 1987), 412–413; see also the documentary by Alexandru Solomon, *Cold Waves*, 2007, Romania.

[92] The Iorga Institute, in particular, was under surveillance by the Securitate. See Şerban Radulescu Zoner, *Securitatea in Institutul de Istorie "Nicolae Iorga"* (Bucharest: Editura Cavallioti, 2008).

[93] Sorin Antohi told me: 'this binary logic is the key to the understanding of an authoritarian system, this is why it is so difficult to break free from an authoritarian system, it always gives you the possibility to say no and yes, and keeps you always in the same mental universe and simply prevents you thinking differently'. Interview with Sorin Anthoi by the author, 3rd February 2013.

[94] I am grateful to Stefano Bottoni for pointing this out to me.

[95] Historian Ioan Opriş edited two volumes in 2005 where he tracks the repression of the historians by the Securitate; none of the historians in his material belonged to the Party History Institute. Ioan Opriş, *Istoricii şi Securitatea* (Bucharest: Ed. Enciclopedică, vol. I – 2004, vol. II – 2006).

[96] For example, Şerban Papacostea, caught reading a French history book, was imprisoned in a work camp tasked with constructing the Danube – Black Sea Channel. When released, Andrei Oţetea accepted him at the Iorga Institute; Interview with Papacostea, cit.; see also Opris, vol. II, 381–385. The volume reports the police file of Papacoştea with the accusation 'he attends the library of the French legation', 385.

ceived the distinction between the repressed "us", and the repressive "them", the Party, of which the Party propagandists and historians were members.

What, more specifically, were the advantages with which the Party managed to attract historians to the Party History Institute? According to the memoirs of some non-Institute historians, they 'received double or triple salaries compared to the researchers of the Academy institutes'.[97] The high level of salaries at ISISP is corroborated by the archival sources. In 1988, the average salary for a researcher at ISISP was around 4,500 lei per month.[98] The Party History Institute was the institution that allowed many contemporary historians to build their careers, supplying them with substantial economic and practical advantages. For example, in addition to the salary, the researchers were also paid well for the books they published.[99] Among the material advantages, the permission to travel abroad, fully reimbursed, for conferences and education was certainly one of the most coveted and luxurious advantages.[100]

The ISISP historians had at their disposal a huge library where it was possible to find a wide range of domestic and foreign publications that were

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[97] Stan, *Istorie și politică*, 102.

[98] The leadership was paid far better: Ion Popescu-Puțuri, who in 1961 had his first salary increase from 5,000 to 5,500 lei, in 1988 received 7,900 lei; Gheorghe Zaharia, who in 1961 earned 4,800 lei, in 1988 received 6,160 lei, followed by Nicolae Copoiu (5,370 lei) and Gheorghe Surpat (5,130 lei). ANIC, ISISP, *State de retribuții* [*Retributions*], 1/1988. The salaries were not raised in the last three years of the regime. See ANIC, ISISP, *State de retribuții* 1/1986, 1/1987. Since no salary tables of the Iorga Institute are available, I cannot verify actual differences in salaries. Interestingly, two ISISP historians contest that the salary difference between ISISP and the Iorga Institute was significant. Interviews with Ion Bulei and Florian Tănăsecu. Archival evidence from 1963 suggests that the salaries of the ISISP historians were anyway lower than those of the propagandists of the Party School "Ștefan Gheorghiu"; ANIC, ISISP, A-2/2, vol. III, *Tabel de salarizare*, 28.5.1963, f. 113.

[99] 'Basically I lived from one book to another. […] For example, for the books on the conservatives, I was paid 70,000 lei; with 70,000 lei you could buy a Dacia. […] There were taxes, but you still got 60,000 lei, and you could buy a car, I bought a car this way, thanks to this book published by Eminescu Publishing House'; Interview with Ion Bulei by the author, 12th February 2013.

[100] Interview with Șerban Papacostea. Several ISISP historians fled Romania by simply refusing to return: one of those was Robert Deutsch, who in 1972 was sent with his wife Carmen Petrescu (daughter of Dumitru Petrescu) to the Tübingen University on a scholarship. In 1974 the couple chose to remain in Germany; R. D., 'Cine este Robert Deutsch, profesorul coordonator al stagiului de formare profesionala efectuat de Corina Dumitrescu in SUA', *Hotnews.ro*, 6 May 2012, available on http://www.hotnews.ro/stiri-esential-12182154-cine-este-robert-deutsch-profesorul-coordonator-stagiului-formare-profesionala-efectuat-corina-dumitrescu-sua.htm

unavailable elsewhere, as well as prohibited foreign publications which were translated for internal use only.[101] The advantages for Party historians also included diverse practical assistance that facilitated professional life. The Party put at the researchers' disposal a number of secretaries and dactylographers, a photo studio, and several copying machines, in order to assist the Party historians in their work.[102]

There were also different hierarchies of access to archival sources. Despite the fact that ISISP was in possession of a part of the Party archive, this is not mentioned in the memoirs as a reason for envy among other historians. The reason for this is probably that this material primarily concerned Party history, which was not a priority at the other institutes. Still, access was much easier for ISISP historians than for those at the Iorga Institute.[103]

A further benefit enjoyed by ISISP historians was the possibility to publish. Due to the shortage of printing paper, the competition for publishing was severe. The ISISP historians were not immune to control and restrictions regarding the printing of individual works, but they could more easily bypass these restrictions by exploiting their position close to the propaganda officials who could facilitate contact with the publishing houses.[104]

But there were also other kinds of material advantages: access to a first-class restaurant on the Institute premises, which was placed in front of the Central Committee in Piața Palatului in the very heart of Bucharest;[105] the privileged access to special stores where it was possible to obtain food and consumer goods unavailable elsewhere; access to special, better-endowed

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[101] Ion Bulei recollects: 'we had the possibility to consult several books published in the West, in the sense that they were translated for the use of the communists, for internal use, and in that library there were also these books, translated […] you did not have many problems, many obstacles, when obtaining these books, it was easy'. Interview with Ion Bulei, 12th February 2013.

[102] ANIC, CC al PCR, Cancelarie, 143/1966, *Referat*, ff. 23–27, f. 25.

[103] Historian Florian Tănăsescu recollected that, in general, 'for the institutional interests, the access to sources was optimal, but at the same time regarding the individual interests of researchers, access was restricted resembling, in many ways, the access of the N. Iorga Institute researchers'. Interview by the author with Florian Tănăsescu, via e-mail, 26th May 2014.

[104] ISISP historian Ion Bulei encountered problems with his manuscript on the Conservative Party, but the help given by Mircea Mușat allowed him to publish. Interview with Ion Bulei, cit. The book was published as Ion Bulei, *Sistemul politic al României moderne. Partidul Conservator* (Bucharest: *Editura Politică*, 1987).

[105] 'The food was good, also in that period, in the 1980s, when there was rationing'; Interview with Ion Bulei, 12th February 2013.

hospitals;[106] and leisure permits and health treatments in villas in the mountains and by the sea.[107] In a context where purchasing power per se did not matter much, the special access to material goods, and other practical advantages that ISISP offered were very substantial rewards.[108]

Furthermore, the Party historians were able to meet others at their own societal level, and also persons within the Party leadership since they had access to the most prestigious leisure club in town, situated in the modern Floreasca quarter.[109] This city quarter represented the general advantages of being a Party activist, since the Party elite lived here.[110]

Due to these advantages, partially shared with the Party members working in the universities and in other research centres, many young history graduates considered ISISP to be an attractive workplace. In the early 1970s, Oțetea saw some of his researchers snapped up by the Institute, which could offer, if not a better research environment, then certainly many more professional and non-professional advantages.[111] The advantages connected

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[106] ANIC, Popescu-Puțuri Familial Fund, 5, ff. 35–48: *Cu privire la îmbunătirea asistenței medicale a cadrelor de partid, de stat și din organizațiile de masa* [*Regarding the improvement of the medical assistance to Party, state and mass organization cadres*]. The Otopeni Hospital "12A" and the General Hospital no. 10 had the task of caring for many directors and presidents with their families, including 'the director and the vice-directors of ISISP' (f. 40), while the historians of ISISP and their families were allocated to Hospital no. 12 in Elias (f. 41), and the administrative personnel of ISISP with their families had at their disposal the General Hospital and the Alexandru Sahia Hospital (f. 43). The same division (directors/historians/administrative personnel) in the aforementioned hospitals existed for the Party History Museum, and for the "Ștefan Gheorghiu" Party School (ibidem).

[107] Stan, *Istorie și politică*, 102.

[108] Interview with Ion Bulei, 12th February 2013.

[109] Ibidem. See also Lavinia Betea, *I se spunea Machiavelli. Ștefan Andrei în dialog cu Lavinia Betea* (Bucharest: Adevărul Holding, 2011), 63.

[110] The Floreasca quarter was built in 1957, and included pre-existing elements of parks and lakes, with commercial activities, leisure complexes, and modern apartments with electrical lighting and central heating. The leisure complex 'was for all those who worked for the press, for all researchers. Not all of those working for the state succeeded in obtaining a membership, or did so with difficulty'. Interview with Ion Bulei. Tismaneănu has concluded that 'the distance between the masses and the leadership was astronomical, the mystery of absolute authority must be safely maintained'; see Tismăneanu, *Lumea secretă a numenclaturii. Amintiri, dezvăluiri, portrete* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2012), 13–22 (cit, 13).

[111] Papacostea recollects the case of Viorica Moisuc, a researcher at the Iorga Institute: 'she was formerly a researcher here, at this institute; she was appreciated by Oțetea. When she received the offer to be transferred to the Party History Institute, where the salaries were higher than here, it was a disappointment for Oțetea, since she was someone who worked well here'. Interview with Șerban Papacostea, 7th February 2013.

to ISISP also seem to have attracted young history graduates dispersed in various cultural institutions in Bucharest.[112] Consequently, Party membership offered decided advantages – but there was also a price to pay when joining 'the privileged of the new power'.[113]

7.3.3 The reward: the "quasi-military voluntary consensual discipline"

The material advantages for the historians did not arrive as a simple payback for work that was merely scholarly. On the contrary, the meaning of scholarship was significantly extended. The kind of researcher that ISISP wanted from the mid-1960s was someone who could perform proper scholarly work, not produce propaganda.[114] So, what was actually required from the historian-activists in exchange for all their professional and private privileges? What characterised the Party historians? How did they differ, in their work, from other historians? What did the Party expect from them? According to Ion Popescu-Puțuri, the Party historian should be characterised by a *quasi-military voluntary, consensual discipline*. What did he mean by this obscure construct? Some clues can be found in a speech elaborating on this strange construct, read in June 1970 at the meeting of the leadership of the Institute with the in-house Party section (*Birolul Organizației de Bază PCR*), found in Popescu-Puțuri's personal archive at the Romanian National Archive.[115]

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[112] Before being enrolled at ISISP, Bulei was working at Enciclopedică Publishing House: 'A former professor of mine […], Titu Georgescu, came to me and asked: "Won't you do a doctorate? […] You would have a scholarship with this doctorate, so for three years you will have the scholarship and you'll write the dissertation". […] "It is interesting" I said. […] Basically, every morning I had to be present [at work] at eight o'clock, at eight o'clock sharp, otherwise problems arose. I was glad not to be obliged to be at the office'. Bulei accepted the doctoral position within the Party History Institute in 1969. Interview with Ion Bulei, 12th February 2013.

[113] Stan, *Istorie și politică*, 102.

[114] According to Florian Tănăsescu, former ISISP researcher, during the Ceaușescu regime, in ISISP 'a rigid distinction between "researcher" and "activist" is not applicable'; interview by the author with Florian Tănăsescu, via e-mail, 26th May 2013.

[115] Popescu-Puțuri private archive, 58, *Cuvintul Tov. Director Ion Popescu-Puțuri în sedința Comitetului de Direcție ținută în ziua de 16 iunie 1970, cu Biroul Organizației de Bază –P.C.R. din Institutul nostru* [*Intervention of the comrade director Ion Popescu-Puțuri in the meeting of the Direction Committee, on the 16th June 1970 with the Bureau of the RCP Base Organization of our Institute*]. The file was a draft of the speech made Popescu-Puțuri.

It was not a very common practice for such a politically relevant, centralised, and organized workplace to have this kind of meeting with a Party section, but Popescu-Puțuri decided to clarify to his collaborators the nature of their work at the Institute. He declared:

> In our work we must be very clear, comrades. We are an Institute of the Party, of the Central Committee. We are told that we stand beside [*pe lîngă*] the Central Committee, only through it do we have a substantial possibility of action. We do not involve the Party leadership in [our] works, we do not really involve the Party leadership by taking positions that we as researchers do in the publications, but we are like a section of the Central Committee. We have to answer as [if we were] activists of the Central Committee. Not only with our writings and our words, in order to defend the positions of our Party in several areas that are connected to the profile of our Institute, and not accidentally since many of you are also part of Party organizations [meaning the propaganda office] where you perform effective and principled work, but also if you take a stand on several important moments of the history of our Party and our homeland, bringing a great contribution to the clarification of some problems and to support the Party point of view.[116]

It was important to make such points, since the ISISP researchers, in 'recent times, […] have been increasingly solicited to take part in several international events, […]. On these occasions they contribute to our Party line on contemporary problems'.[117] As a consequence, 'our researchers are questioned somewhat more compared to others. […] In order to realize this important work […] it is necessary to introduce the Party spirit in our mode of work'.[118] This spirit was constituted of a 'collective spirit' of work whose product would greatly enhance the teamwork. This collective spirit was contrasted with the single individual's disregard for what was best for the Party, merely seeking personal profit. As director, Popescu-Puțuri wanted to eliminate from the Institute the 'petit-bourgeois spirit' seeking personal interest, and instead enhance teamwork, like 'in the agricultural cooperatives': 'what is negative shall be eliminated, [together with] […] those who do not obey, who cannot adapt to this, who is refractory in the collective work […].[119] In fact, 'discipline […] is a Party characteristic. A voluntary, consensual discipline that must be quasi-military. This is the

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[116] Ibid., ff. 36–37.
[117] Ibid., f. 37.
[118] Ibidem.
[119] Ibid., f. 39.

Party'.[120] Discipline was necessary, according to Popescu-Puțuri, in order for the Institute to prevail and reach the Party's goals:

> No one obliges anyone to stay here by force. If one is a genius here, one can be a genius also in other places. If one is a half-genius here, he can be a full-genius elsewhere. [...] But here there are some rules, there is one discipline, one statute. [...] Those who regiment themselves can stay, those who do not, cannot. That is why discipline is freely accepted [*liber consimțită*]. You accepted when you entered here this form of discipline and you must submit yourself to this discipline. If you do not consent, you will not be admitted to the Party, you will stay outside. [...] Anarchy is introduced into the country if each person does what he wants and in the way he wants.[121]

Popescu-Puțuri made reference to the specific case that had led him to address the audience with this speech on the discipline of the historian-activists of ISISP: 'comrade [Ion M.] Oprea [...] does not understand the Party spirit and does not want to regiment himself to this discipline either'.[122] According to Popescu-Puțuri, Răutu had told him to remove Oprea, main researcher at ISISP, since he was not a Party member: 'send him to the Iorga [Institute], send him somewhere else, at the professoriate, [...] but next week he must not be there anymore'.[123] Popescu-Puțuri sent Nicolae Goldberger to convince Oprea to join the Party, and he eventually accepted.[124] Popescu-Puțuri stressed that Oprea joined the Party by his own will, therefore he should 'submit to its discipline',[125] but evidently he did not.

Oprea was accused of a number of faults. He had written a number of works outside the scope of ISISP without informing the Institute directors. He was also allegedly a part of a collective that planned to present a paper, unchecked by any Party organ, at a history conference in Moscow, on behalf of the Romanian National Committee of History. Apparently, Oprea was also writing with Eliza Campus, researcher at the Iorga Institute. Andrei Oțetea, director of the Iorga Institute, had called Popescu-Puțuri com-

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[120] Ibidem: 'o discipline liber consimțită care trebuie să fie cvasimilitară'.
[121] Ibid., f. 49.
[122] Ibidem.
[123] Ibid., f. 42.
[124] Ibid., f. 43.
[125] Ibidem. The complete quote is: 'he retained the impression that we asked him to join the Party. That we had great need of his abilities. I shall declare that no, no, categorically no. The Party does not allow this. He can most surely stay where he is, but when he is a Party member he must submit to its discipline'.

plaining about Oprea's failure to submit his article. Popescu-Puțuri also received similar complaints from Miron Constantinescu, president of the Academy of Socio-Political Sciences.[126]

According to Popescu-Puțuri, Oprea considered that as a historian he could maintain his independence when he was not working specifically on the Institute projects.[127] Popescu-Puțuri spelled out the discrepancy in what Oprea wrote for the Institute and in what he wrote for the Iorga Institute, and maintained that this caused trouble for the direction of the Institute.[128] A historian employed at the Party Institute had to distance himself from any point of view that had not been previously discussed within the Institute or, at least, should not express himself on that specific matter. Those who did not submit to this rule would have to be removed.[129]

In somebody did not agree with the Institute's plans, Popescu-Puțuri claimed that they did not have to hide their dissention, since 'they are not obliged to agree'.[130] Rather, they should communicate their opinions to the collective. The Party, concluded Popescu-Puțuri, was made up of persons that collaborated within a common project together with others. The Institute did not expect blind adherence to discipline, but rather the internalization of Party discipline, which was far more than merely playing the part of an activist – it meant *becoming* activists.[131] Popescu-Puțuri wanted to root out individualist tendencies from the Institute, reminding the employees of the many advantages they were given by the Party.[132] Accep-

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[126] Ibid., f. 45.

[127] Ibidem.

[128] Ibid., ff. 46–47: Popescu-Puțuri allegedly 'received phone-calls […] [telling] "How is this possible? Your Institute has researchers […] that sometimes sign that they belong to the Institute, but do otherwise when [their works] appear in another publishing house? This means that your men do not have a unitary point of view, the man – the researcher – has two points of view: one that is the true one that appears when he publishes [here] and [an]other one probably there" [elsewhere]'.

[129] Otherwise, according to Popescu-Puțuri, they would 'sicken the entire organism […] two or three such cases could contaminate the Institute. Because of this we must obey without hesitation […] to the Party'; Ibid., f. 46.

[130] Ibid., f. 60.

[131] 'We are not saints, we are not placed like icons so that the world worships us. We are human beings'; Ibid., f. 61.

[132] Ibid., f. 49: 'the Institute gives me holidays, the Institute gives me a home. The Institute helps me so that I can have my own apartment. The Institute helps me to go abroad […]. I can easily trick them [the direction of the Institute] since I have certain qualities, I write an article, an essay, and a book. But these persons [whom I try to trick] are wrong to think so, since these works are appreciated, are well-balanced, and it is not on the basis of these works that a man is assessed, how he is considered'.

tance of Party discipline and the collective control of work was required of everybody at the Institute in addition to professional skills[133] – otherwise, one would be cast out, like Oprea, who was removed from ISISP and transferred to the Iorga Institute.[134]

This incident indicates very clearly which practices were expected of an ISISP historian and, at the same time, indicates how the ISISP historians who wanted visibility outside ISISP had to act in order to bypass ISISP's control. Basically, there were two ways to make a career at ISISP: the first option was to be a sincere activist who operated according to the Party canon: many chose this road. The other way was followed by those who wanted respectability also outside ISISP (those who Popescu-Puțuri labelled depreciatively as 'the careerists'[135]). For them, the only way to manage was to adhere to the Party orders while working for ISISP, but to leave aside the Party discipline when doing extra work for other institutions.

7.3.4 Conclusions

The Romanian historians' negative assessment of the Party History Institute historians focuses on three factors: insufficient scholarly training, unfair access to privileges, and the ISISP historians' compromise with abusive political power. In this section I have shown what enrolment at the Party History Institute could bring to its historians: high salaries, good working conditions, better chances of being published, access to material goods otherwise unavailable, and proximity to political (and economical) power. But the tirade of Popescu-Puțuri tells what was at stake: working at ISISP meant certain obligations.

Individual examples of disobedience to the obligations existed, as the case of Oprea and several others described in this dissertation have demonstrated. But they are less interesting in the investigation of the agency of the institution and of what it required from its personnel. The next sub-chapter will provide an example of how the Party orders on history-writing could remain unattended at ISISP even at institutional level.

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[133] Ibidem: 'anyone can remain outside the Party. He can write some material that has generally some value and stay at home. […] But here much more is required. Here there is an obligation to the collective. […]. But if one cannot regiment himself […] for the ideal that this collective aims for […] he is honest if he stays apart'.
[134] Stan, *Revoluția română*, 11–13.
[135] ANIC, Popescu-Puțuri Familial Archive, 58, *Cuvântul…* f. 61.

7.4 Expanding ISISP history-writing, preventing revision

In search of a usable past,[136] the ISISP historians had to implement the national-communist canon by extending the Institute's research interest towards pre-communist times and national history. At the same time, they had to take a position in front of the tenets enounced in the works previously published by the Party History Institute during Gheorghiu-Dej's times: they had to perform a revision. While the process of canon implementation – that is, accumulating new historical materials over the old ones, according to the canon – was relatively simple, the process of revision of what for the canon was spurious or controversial was pretty difficult. These pages present both processes and their outcomes.

The most notable trait of ISISP's production in the 1960s and early 70s is the expansion of research interest to the pre-1918 period. The incorporation of national history into the history of the Party and the workers' movement is evident from the publication of several volumes of documents on the history of the workers' movement, starting from 1821. When the national-communist narrative canon was established, ISISP began to publish these documents with an increased focus on the 19th century.[137]

During the period 1964–65, the Institute also started to address topics connected to the Second World War and Romania's participation in it. Most notably, the help given by the Red Army in the liberation of the country was reduced to a secondary role, while the role of the Romanian

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[136] The expression is taken from Constantin Iordachi, Balázs Trencsényi, 'In Search of a Usable Past: The Question of National Identity in Romanian Studies, 1990–2000', *East European Politics and Societies* 17 (3/2003), 415–453. Originally, the expression was used by Van Wyck Brooks in 1915.

[137] ISISP published the following volumes (in order of appearance): Ion Popescu-Puțuri, Augustin Deac, Marin Florescu et al. (eds.), *Documente din istoria mișcarii muncitorești din România (1916–1921)* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1966); Augustin Deac, Marin Badea, Ion Iacoș (eds.), *Documente din istoria mișcarii muncitorești din România (1910–1915)* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1968); Ion Popescu-Puțuri, Augustin Deac, Ion Iacoș (eds.), *Documente din istoria mișcarii muncitorești din România (1893–1900)*, (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1969); Ion Popescu-Puțuri, Augustin Deac, Marin Florescu et al. (eds.), *Documente privind începuturile mișcarii muncitorești și socialiste din România (1821–1878)* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1971); Ion Popescu-Puțuri, Augustin Deac, Marin Florescu et al. (eds.), *Documente din istoria mișcarii muncitorești din România (1879–1892)* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1972); Ion Popescu-Puțuri, Augustin Deac, Ion Iacoș (eds.), *Documente din istoria mișcarii muncitorești din România (1900–1909)* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1975).

army was elevated.[138] Another new field of study for the Institute was the country's nineteenth and early twentieth century history,[139] a previous but never realized desire of Mihail Roller. This was now incorporated into the new narrative canon promoted by the regime: the incorporation of Transylvania in 1918,[140] the national and international politics of Romania during the interwar period,[141] and a focus on non-socialist and non-communist political and intellectual figures such as Nicolae Titulescu and Nicolae Iorga[142] became prominent narratives of the new canon.

[138] See, i.e., Ion Popescu-Puțuri, Gheorghe Zaharia, Nicolae Goldberger, Nicolae N. Constantinescu, Nicolae Copoiu, (eds.), *La Roumanie pendant la deuxième guerre mondiale. Études* (Bucharest: Editura Academiei RPR, 1964); Constantin Nicolae, Ilie Petre, Matei Dumitru, Vasile Gheorghe (eds.), *Armata română în razboiul antihitlerist. Culegere de articole* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1965); Ion Popescu-Puțuri, Gheorghe Zaharia, Ilie Rădulescu, Valter Roman, Vladimir Zaharescu, Aurel Petri, Constantin C. Popa, Leonida Ion, Leonida Loghin, Nicolae N. Constantinescu, Vasile Anescu, *Contribuția României la Victoria asupra fascismului* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1965); I. Popescu-Puțuri, Gheorghe Zaharia, Ilie Rădulescu, Valter Roman, Vladimir Zaharescu, Aurel Petri, Constantin C. Popa, L. Ion, L. Loghin, N. N. Constantinescu (eds.), *La contribution de la Roumanie à la victoire sur le fascism, Études* (Bucharest, Editura Academiei RPR, 1965); Aurel Petri, *Teorie și metodă în știința militară*, Editura Militară, Bucharest, 1968; Eugen Bantea, Constantin Nicolae, Gheorghe Zaharia, *August 1944 – Mai 1945* (Bucharest, Editura Militară, 1969) [this latter monograph was published also in Russian and English (Bucharest: Editura Meridiane, 1970]; Gheorghe Zaharia, Petre Ilie, Mihai Tălăngescu, Gheorghe David, C. Mindru (eds.), *În numele libertății și prieteniei. Documente, extrase din presă și amintiri despre participarea României la eliberarea Ungariei de sub jugul fascist*, vol. 1 (Bucharest: Editura Militară, 1970); idem, *În numele libertății și prieteniei. Documente, extrase din presă și amințiri despre participarea României la eliberarea Cehoslovaciei de sub jugul fascist*, vol. 2, 1 (Bucharest: Editura Militară, 1970); ISISP, *August '44* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1971).
[139] I. Popescu-Puțuri, Petre Constantinescu-Iași, Ioan M. Oprea et al. (eds.), *Din istoria contemporană a României. Culegere de studii* (Bucharest: Editura Științifică, 1965); Constantin Căzănișteanu, Dan Berindei (eds.), *Revoluția română din 1848* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1969); Andrei Oțetea (ed.), *Istoria poporului român* (Bucharest: Editura Științifică, 1970).
[140] Constantin Nuțu, Mihail Tomescu, (eds.), *Contribuții bibliografice privind Unirea Transilvaniei cu România*, Bucharest, 1969; I. Popescu-Puțuri, A. Dead (eds.), *Unirea Transilvaniei cu România. Decembrie 1918* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1970).
[141] Gheorghe Matei, Elisa Campus, Dumitru Tuțu, Robert Deutsch, Florica Nedelcu, Viorica Moisuc, Al. Gh. Savu, *Studii privind politica externă a României (1919–1939)* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1969); Alexandru Gh. Savu, *Dictatura regală (1938–1940)* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1970); Gheorghe Matei, *Dezarmarea în contextul problemelor internaționale și atitudinea României (1919–1934)* (Bucharest: Editura Academiei RPR, 1971); Ion Certechi, Damian Hurezeanu (eds.), *Națiunea și contemporaneitatea* (Bucharest: Editura Științifică, 1971).
[142] Titu Georgescu, *Nicolae Iorga împotriva hitlerismului*, Editura Științifică, Bucharest, 1966; Ion M. Oprea, *Nicoale Titulescu* (Bucharest: Editura Științifică, 1966); idem, *Nicolae Titulescu's Diplomatic Activity* (Bucharest: Editura Academiei RPR, 1966).

While there was a general orientation towards previously untouched aspects of Romanian history, and a tendency to project backwards in time the origin of the workers' movement, some of the previous projects continued. For instance, research on the history of the socialist and workers' movement press remained a priority, and collections of documents related to this continued to be published from 1964 to 1971 without interruption.[143] At the same time, at the beginning of the 1970s, the activity of the Institute was focused on defining a new canon on the history of the workers' movement[144] and the Party organizations during the interwar years,[145] and specifically on the Communist Youth organization.[146] The Workers' Social-Democrat Party history was purged of the alleged crimes ascribed to it in the Gheorghiu-Dej era (reformism, opportunism of their leaders, populism), and its heritage was included in the workers' movement history.[147]

[143] Ion Popescu-Puțuri, Nicolae Goldberger, Augustin Deac et al. (eds.), *Presa muncitorească și socialista din România*, vol. I, part 1 (1865–1889), part 2 (1890–1900) (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1964); Ion Popescu-Puțuri, Augustin Deac et all. (eds.), *Presa muncitorească și socialista din România*, vol. II, part 1 (1900–1907), part 2 (1907–1916) (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1968); idem, *Presa muncitorească și socialista din România*, vol. 3, part 1 (1917–1919) (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1971); part 2 (1919–1921) (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1973).
[144] ISISP researchers dedicated several articles to the pre-WWI workers' movement organizations from the 1950s. This tradition continued in the 60s and 70s, i.e. with Vasile Petrișor, 'Coordonate și caracteristici ale evoluției procesului de organizate profesională a clasei muncitoare din România (1846–1906)' *Anale de Istorie* (6/1971), 99–116.
[145] For example, Ion Popescu-Puțuri, Augustin Deac, Florea Dragnea, Olimpiu Matichescu (eds.), *Organizații de masă legale și ilegale create, conduse sau influențate de P.C.R. 1921–1944*, vol. 1 (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1970). The second volume was edited in 1981 (Bucharest: Editura Politică).
[146] Elena Cristescu, Constantin Petculescu, Florea Dragne (eds.), *File din istoria U. T. C.* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1972). Constantin Petculescu, *Crearea Uniunii Tineretului Comunist* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1972); Ion Popescu-Puțuri (ed.), *Tineretul comunist în acțiune: Contribuții la istoria Uniunii tineretului Comunist din România* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1972).
[147] Ion Popescu-Puțuri, Augustin Deac, Nicolae Copoiu, *Mișcarea muncitoriească din România 1893–1990* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1965); Nicolae Copoiu, Refacerea Partidului Social-Democrat din România, 1893–1921 (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1966); Damian Hurezeanu, '75 de ani de la crearea P.S.D.M.R.' *Lupta de Clasă* (3/1968), 11–21; Ștefan Mușat, 'Începuturile mișcării socialiste și muncitorești din România. Crearea P.S.D.M.R.', *Anale de Istorie* (1/1969), 104–124; Ș. Mușat, Mișcarea muncitorească din România in anii 1900–1918' *Anale de Istorie* (2/1969), 88–114; Titu Georgescu, 'De la revoluționarii democrați la întiul partid politic al clasei muncitoare', *Anale de Istorie* (5/1970), 3–24. Elena Ciobanu, Mihai Cruceanu, 'Mișcarea muncitorească din România în cele doua decenii premergătoare creării partidului comunist', *Anale de Istorie* (5/1970), 46–38; Ion Mamina, Constantin Căzănișteanu, '60 de ani de la reconstituirea

Articles signed by ISISP researchers on this topic in various Party and Academy journals between the 1950s and early 60s were now criticized for carrying 'considerations not conforming to reality': this conclusion is made by historian Ştefan Muşat, who wrote an article in *Anale de Istorie*," Considerations on the Development of the Historiography of the Workers' Movement and of the R. C. P. after 23rd August 1944", the content of which had been discussed at the ISISP steering committee before being published.[148] Muşat referred to articles signed by both former and still active historians and leading figures at ISISP (i.e., Gheorghe Matei, Damian Hurezeanu, I. Iacoş, Nora Munteanu), so the main intention was probably not to attack those particular activists/historians, but rather to pinpoint the weaknesses in those works in order to move beyond them, reject the canon they were embedded in and subsequently re-use the historical sources when constructing a new historiographical canon.

Ştefan Muşat's article clearly contested and refuted previous historical dogma. First of all, he provided a critical assessment of the works on the history of the workers' movement previously published during Roller's era at ISISP.[149] Furthermore, Muşat challenged some central historiographical conceptions: for example, that the workers' unions in Romania had been formed in 1905, as had been claimed in the late 1950s and early 60s by ISISP

P.S.D.R.', *Anale de Istorie* (1/1971), 47–63; ISISP, *Crearea Partidului Comunist Român. Mai 1921* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1971); T. Georgescu, *De la revoluționarii democrați la făuririi Partidului Comunist Român* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1971); Clara Cuşnir-Miahilovici, Florea Dragne, Gheorghe Unc (eds.), *Mişcarea muncitorească din România, 1916–1921* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1971).

[148] Ştefan Muşat, 'Considerații privind dezvoltarea istoriografiei mişcării muncitoreşti şi a P.C.R. după 23 August 1944', *Anale de Istorie* (3/1972), 11–31; the quote is from page 20. In the article (11) there is a reference to the date of the session of the Steering Committee of ISISP where the content of the article was discussed and approved (12th May 1972) – but the minutes of the session have not yet been found in the ISISP archive.

[149] While the newly edited volumes of documents were said to 'represent a real work instrument' for the historians, Roller's publications 'did not have any scholarly criteria as a basis for the investigation, selection, and editing of the documents of the workers' movement. Due to their simplicity and deficiencies, these [works] are obsolete and deny the real historical truth of our country and the requirements of a rigorous scholarly methodology'; Ştefan Muşat, 'Considerații privind…', 16. The passage refers to M. Roller (ed.), *Documente din mişcarea muncitorească, 1872–1900* (Bucharest: Editura Confederaţiei Generale a Muncii din România, 1946) and M. Roller (ed.), *Documente din mişcarea muncitorească, 1872–1916* (Bucharest: Editura Confederaţiei Generale a Muncii din România, 1947).

historians Viorica David, Nora Munteanu, Ion Iacoş and Vasile Petrişor.[150] The unions, according to the new narrative based on the principles of class struggle and proletarian internationalism (published by the same authors between 1965 and 1971), actually already existed at the end of the nineteenth century.[151]

Muşat considered that the new historical findings refuted the validity of the historical works published in the 1950s, alleging that these contained 'wrong, unscientific theses and considerations […] according to which our workers' and socialist movement had started only in the mid-1870s and only due to the impulse of some external factors'.[152] Muşat specifically criticised a monograph by Gheorghe Haupt, a former ISISP historian who had emigrated to France, for containing such errors,[153] and referred to some of the works which had revised those ideas, indicating the influence of Marx's ideas in Romania.[154]

The re-evaluation of the Workers' Social-Democrat Party went hand in hand with the reassessment of the socialist and social-democrat politicians:

[150] Viorica David, Nora Munteanu, 'Desfăşurarea lucrărilor Conferinţei sindacale din 1906', *Anale de Istorie* (6/1958), 146–155; Ion Iacoş, Vasile Petrişor, 'Crearea şi activitatea sindicatelor în România în anii 1905–1906', *Anale de Istorie* (1/1962), 76–102.
[151] Nora Munteanu, 'Mişcarea sindicală din România pînă la primul război mondial', *Anale de Istorie* (6/1965), 14–29; Ion Iacoş, Vasile Petrişor, 'Aspecte din lupta pentru transformarea asociaţiilor de ajutor reciproc din vechea Românie în organizaţii bazate pe lupta de clasă', *Anale de Istorie* (6/1967), 113–134; V. Petrişor, 'Coordonate şi caracteristici ale evoluţiei procesului de organizare profesională a clasei muncitoare din România (1846–1906)', *Anale de Istorie* (6/1971), 99–116.
[152] Muşat, 'Consideraţii privind' 19.
[153] Ibidem.
[154] Ion Popescu-Puţuri et al. (eds.), *Marea revoluţie socialistă din octombrie şi miscară revoluţionară şi democratică din România. Documente şi amintiri* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1967); Damian Hurezeanu, 'Răspandirea ideilor "Capitalului" în România şi influenţa lor asupra mişcării socialiste din România şi influenţă lor asupra mişcării muncitoreşti la sfîrşitul secolul al XIXI–lea', *Anale de Istorie* (3/1967), 96–101; Ion Iacoş, Vasile Petrişor, 'Idedile "Capitalului" lui Karl Marx în teoria şi practica mişcarii socialiste din România', *Anale de Istorie* (4/1967), 3–9; Gheorghe Surpat, 'Ideile "Capitalului" în presa muncitorească şi socialist din România', *Studii* (4/1967), 654–665; Gheorghiţă Voicu, Alexandru Gheorghe, *Marxismul şi contemporaneitatea: comunicările prezentate la sesiunea ştiinţifică consacrată aniversării a 150 de ani de la naşterea lui Karl Marx, 25–27 aprilie 1968* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1968); I. Popescu-Puţuri (ed.), *În sprijinul Republicii Ungare a sfaturilor: (Solidaritatea oamenilor muncii din România cu Republica Ungară a Sfaturilor): 1919: Documente şi amintiri* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1969); Augustin Deac (ed.), *Engels şi România* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1970); ISISP, *Lenin văzut the români. Documente şi aminţiri* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1970); ISISP, *Forţa creatoare a ideilor leniniste* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1970).

the works of Constantin Dobrogeanu-Gherea,[155] considered during Stalinism as a populist demagogue, and the documents written by Romanian socialist thinkers and activists in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were republished by ISISP[156] and non-ISISP historians[157], along with short biographies of the interwar veterans.[158]

Mușat also criticized historical works from previous decades that considered the participation of Romania in the First World War as an imperialist act: this was the case with Vasile Liveanu's *1918*, published in 1960, a book that Mușat 12 years later said was an example of a historical work that contained 'falsification of historical facts'.[159] The same volume was also accused of containing 'incorrect interpretations of some RCP documents from the interwar period that considered Romania as an imperialistic multinational state'.[160] This incorrect interpretation, Mușat alleged, had led the Party historians to present in a negative light the socialists' position on the national question and their active role in the Romanian unification of 1918. With the re-evaluation of national ideology, the socialists from the pre-1914 period became for the Party an important heritage, by which it

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[155] I. e., Constantin Dobrogeanu-Gherea, *Studii social-politice* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1968); idem, *Asupra criticei. Studii și articole* (Bucharest: Editura Minerva, 1973). His bibliography was published in 1968: Mihail Cruceanu, Florin Tănăsescu, *Al. Dobrogeanu-Gherea* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1970). From the mid-seventies, the Editura Politică published the complete works of Dobrogeanu-Gherea, *Opere complete* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, Vol. 1-2-3 (1976), 4 (1977), 5 (1978), 8 (1983)).

[156] Ion Iacoș (ed.), *Christian Racovski – Scrieri social-politice (1900–1916)* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1977); Stelian Neagoe, *Nicolae Codreanu* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1970); Constantin Pîrvulescu, Georgeta Tudoran, *Dimitrie Marinescu* (Bucharest: ISISP, 1971); Nicoale Petreanu, Dan Baran, *I. C. Frimu* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1969); Maria Bujor, *Ștefan Gheorghiu și epoca sa* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1968).

[157] For example, on T. Diamant see Zigu Ornea, Ion Cojocaru, *Falansterul de la scăieini* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1966). On C. Mille, see Tiberiu Avramescu, *Constantin Mille. Tinerețea unui socialist* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1973).

[158] Ion Popescu-Puțuri, Titu Georgescu (eds.), *Purtători de flamuri revoluționare*, Vol. 1 (Bucharest: Editura Științifică, 1971). According to Gheorghe I. Ioniță, those who were portrayed and also their relatives addressed several complaining letters to the CC, to ISISP, and to Editura Politică. Nicolae Ceaușescu evidently stopped a projected second volume in order to safeguard the personality cult and to avoid direct conflict with the veterans. See Ioniță, *O viață, un destin*, 134.

[159] Mușat, 'Considerații', 26. The volume in question is Vasile Liveanu, *1918. Din istoria luptelor revoluționare din România* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1960). The same accusations were made about a monograph by Ion Gheorghiu and an article signed by Nicoale Copoiu, both of which appeared in the 1950s: Ion Gheorghiu, *Relațiile românoruse* (Bucharest: Editura Academiei, 1956); Nicoale Copoiu, 'Partidul social-democrat din România în ajunul primului război mondial', *Studii* (4/1958).

[160] Mușat, 'Considerații', 26.

was possible for the Party to inscribe itself into national history.[161] According to the new canon, with the development of the new unified national state, 'the workers' and the socialist movement had gained new dimensions and perspectives'. The new works edited by ISISP in this manner also indicated a new time-frame for the foundation of the RCP.[162]

The article signed by Ştefan Muşat divided historiography into "good" and "bad" contributions, attributing to their authors good or bad interpretations of the past. In a subsequent steering committee meeting in November 1972, the ISISP historians discussed the planned sequel to that article, a longer piece on the historiography of the workers' movement during the interwar period, soon to be published in *Anale de Istorie*. The majority of the historians present at the meeting criticized the 80-page draft signed by Ş. Muşat; all of them, officially, agreed with the publication of the article, but they also raised a number of critical points that taken together evidenced a strong and diversified opposition to it. Since the manuscript article was never actually published, and since the original draft has not yet been found in the ISISP archive, its specific content is not altogether clear. However, judging from the records of the discussion it is possible to conclude that Muşat's draft followed the same outline as his article on the post-WWII historiography.

First of all, the discussion clarified that "Ştefan Muşat" was a pseudonym, not a real person. The real authors behind the pseudonym seem to have been seven young ISISP historians, one of whom was Viorica Moisuc.[163] Deac, who was present at the debate, defended the publication of the article, and stressed that it could have been signed "Ştefan Muşat" or "ISISP" if the content of the article was shared among the historians, since it was only a matter of reaching a common position. While it remains unclear

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[161] From 1968, the Academy was in the front line of this battle of re-appropriation: see, i. e., Miron Constantinescu, Ştefan Pascu, Ladislau Banyai (eds.), *Desăvîrşirea unificării statului national roman. Unirea Transilvaniei cu vechea Românie* (Bucharest: Editura Academiei RSR, 1968); ISISP followed this trend during the subsequent years: see, i.e., I. Popescu-Puţuri, A. Deac, Marin Badea (eds.), *Unirea Transilvaniei cu România. 1 Decembrie 1918* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1971).

[162] O. Matichescu, N. Goldberger, F. Dragne, *Greva generala din România 1920* (Bucharest: ISISP, 1970); I. Popescu-Puţuri, A. Deac, *Crearea partidului comunist Român (Mai 1921)* (Bucharest: Editura Ştiinţifică, 1972); quoted in Muşat, 'Consideraţii', 29.

[163] Ibid., f. 80.

who were the real authors behind the article,[164] it is noteworthy that it was published under a pseudonym rather than anonymously: anonymity, in *Anale de Istorie*, meant that the article represented a common position endorsed by ISISP, while a signed article did not.

The historians who were present pointed out that Muşat's criticisms would not only damage the Institute and its credibility among the general public, but also the prestige of Editura Politică, which had the responsibility for printing the books that Muşat had indicated to be examples of bad historiography. All the historians present at the meeting agreed that the title of the article was misleading, since the topic it dealt with was history, not historiography, and the historical works in question all belonged to the post-WWII period.[165] Head of section Gheorghe Unc, who had been at ISISP since 1957, proposed that the authors of the criticized articles and monographs should be given the possibility to explain themselves,[166] since the responsibility for the criticized theses belonged not only to them, but also to the Institute and the publishing houses that had printed them. Was the Institute ready to question its own past? Marin Badea added that he could not understand what exactly the criticism of the article consisted of – whether the criticism regarded the incorrect interpretations of historians or the wrong assumptions in the Party directives used when editing the document collections.[167] Nicolae Copoiu, who supported the publication of the article, pointed out that it was important since there was still no historiographical study on this subject; the article could have helped the general public to gain a deeper understanding of the work of the ISISP

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[164] Gheorghe Surpat, who evidently was not among the authors of the article, suggested that 'it should be signed by the two or three comrades with their real names': 'I do not find any reason why this material should appear under a pseudonym'; ibid., f. 71.

[165] ANIC, ISISP, A-5/26, Vol. II, *Stenograma Consiliului ştiinţific din 3.XI.1972 în cadrul căruia s-a dezbătut referatul "Consideraţii privind dezvoltarea istoriei muncitoreşti şi a istoriei PCR în perioda 1921–1944*, f. 1–104; Gheorghe Matei: 'in the present form, the study [...] represents a historical narrative, not historiographical', f. 3. Gheorghe Zaharia questions that the article do not acknowledge Pătrăşcanu's works, nor many works by the communist historians that appeared in the journal *Era Socialista*, but also many works by Constantinescu-Iaşi and Roller, and many 'brochures of the RCP of the years 1936–1939' (f. 101); and, at the same time, Zaharia considers that the article ignores many works recently published by ISISP (f. 100–102).

[166] Ibid., f. 19. In Unc's words, 'those who have worked here [in the past] shall give an explanation' for the theses in their articles.

[167] Ibid., f. 34–36.

historians under Stalinism;[168] but this, he said, should be done with the 'methodological consent' of the historians,[169] since Party historians cannot be held personally responsible for previous Party theses.[170]

Zaharia considered that the article should be published, but that it would be better for all the actors involved if its style were 'less brutal',[171] since usually 'the tone makes the music'.[172] His general opinion was that the distinction between the works published before and after 1965 was far too trenchant: 'some works published after 1965, do they not have limits? Do they not have errors?'[173] He maintained that it was the Institute that carried the main responsibility for those works, and therefore the Institute should take a position on them.

The transition towards a new historical narrative was evidently not an easy matter, since those who wrote history between 1951 and 1964 at the Institute were not ready to admit they were responsible for writing bad pieces of history. This clearly prevented ISISP from stating openly its position on the criticized works from the 1950s and 60s. Deac made reference to two previous sessions of the steering committee where the historians had agreed to write an article on the interwar historiography of the workers' movement: 'we've had two sessions until now, [in] both [we] have said "yes", let's research, let's research, but I see that many [who are not identified by Deac] come and impose limits on the others; this is the present behaviour of the researchers'.[174] What Deac expressed is quite logical: none of the authors mentioned in the article wanted to be given the responsibility for having written outdated history with obsolete theses.

In this "blame game", the most vulnerable ones were those who had exposed themselves to criticism during the previous decades: primarily Mihail Roller, whose historical writings were considered completely biased from both an ideological and a scholarly-methodological point of view. Also Nora Munteanu, who from the 1950s had been writing profusely on the

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[168] 'If a document is signed RCP, spread through the means of the RCP, it is an RCP document no matter who inspired it; historically, it belongs to the RCP and from this we must draw our conclusions; the RCP must be shown in history as it has been depicted in the documents. Whether we like it or not, we cannot throw out these documents from history'; ibid., f. 66.

[169] Ibidem.

[170] Ibidem.

[171] Ibid., f. 87.

[172] Ibidem.

[173] Ibidem.

[174] Ibid., f. 80.

workers' unions (and was still writing in the mid-1960s) was alleged to have written biased historical essays.[175] This group also comprised former director Cușnir-Mihailovici and Vasile Liveanu.[176]

After having read the material prepared by the "Ștefan Mușat collective", Popescu-Puțuri and Deac made 'a series of improvements, in order to be more prudent'[177] taking heed of the position of the Institute and its previous productions and the positions taken by the Party in the past. Popescu-Puțuri, who was absent from the meeting, had handed Zaharia a letter that did not motivate him to publish the article, but that obliged anyone who opposed the decision to do so to state openly their reasons in a counter-article in *Anale de Istorie*.[178] Practically, any form of opposition to the publication of the article would have resulted in defending all that "Ștefan Mușat" had criticized as "bad historiography"; a position that none of the historians or activists were evidently very pleased to take.

Zaharia was clearly not pleased with the publication of the article, since he considered it a bad idea for ISISP and for its historians, and perhaps wanted to avoid a heavy responsibility. He said he would have stopped this project if it had been in his power,[179] since the goal that the leadership had was simply to indicate the state of the history-writing on the workers' movement 'in a sober, elegant, scholarly, weighted and carefully chosen way, as much as needed *and not much more*'.[180] This process had gone beyond what was intended by the leadership. Nevertheless, since the Party, through Popescu-Puțuri, *ordered it*, the article should have appeared.

Zaharia, in his capacity as senior-in-command at the meeting (Popescu-Puțuri being absent), listed a set of orders for those responsible for publishing the article, to be effectuated before publication.[181] He thereby

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[175] Ibidem.

[176] Ibid., f. 88.

[177] Ibid., ff. 76–77; words by A. Deac.

[178] Ibid., f. 97. The letter from Popescu-Puțuri, read aloud by Zaharia, stated: 'the material […] shall be published in the next volume of the journal *Anale de istorie*. The discussion of the material at the meeting on Tuesday […] shall be recorded, shall have edited minutes, specifying the position of each member of the scientific council; those members of the council who are against publishing the material are invited to provide the *Anale* with their points of view regarding the contents of the article. […] After the amendments, […] the material […] shall be sent to the editorial board of the *Anale* and then scrutinized at the section for propaganda for a decision on its content'.

[179] 'Why do we guard against saying that the Institute patronized some [kind of] works during a certain period, in the spirit of those times?'; ibid., f. 88

[180] Ibid., f. 91.

[181] Ibid., f. 96.

opened up a possibility to stop the entire project.[182] If anyone in the chain of responsibility - the "Ştefan Muşat" collective, the editorial board of *Anale de istorie*, or the propaganda employees –raised objections, the article would not be published. Clearly it was in the interest of a majority of the historians and Party activists to avoid personal responsibility for the previous canon. So, eventually, the second Muşat article was never published – but there is no clear evidence as to where in the chain of responsibilities the link broke.

Once ISISP found itself needing to produce a historiographical piece of its own historiography, to be done in order to set a clear distinction between the previous biased historiography and the new canon, they ran into problems. The Institute was able to express itself only in a single article published in *Anale de Istorie*, while the follow-up article was stopped from publication because it was strongly – if clandestinely -opposed by the collective of ISISP. The old propagandists were not prepared to be made responsible by their youngest colleagues, who were ready to expose them, for the previous Stalinist historiography. But part of the leadership of the Institute clearly did not savour the idea of publishing the second part of the article, probably fearing some kind of retribution from the old propagandists, or the opening of a process of revision with an uncertain, and even risky, development. What is certain is that the initiative to publish these articles came from the highest quarters. However, the way in which ISISP chose to apply this directive was discrete and almost impersonal. Both articles were written by a collective of young historians under a pseudonym, indicating clearly that ISISP did not want to have any direct responsibility for them, but that the message had to be delivered, in one way or in another.

Only one article of the two planned was actually published, while the manuscript of the second one is still missing. The decision of Zaharia to slow down and impede the process as much as possible served to protect comrades and colleagues whose positions had become increasingly pre-

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[182] Zaharia said: 'I allow myself to recommend in conclusion to comrade Deac that I have been given orders by the director […] the task to edit this material, he will not give the revised article to the editorial board of *Anale* until he himself is convinced about what must be said and how, and what is actually said [in the article]; and the editorial board of the journal *Anale* should not send [it] to the section of propaganda until comrade Matei is convinced that the article corresponds with what has been discussed here; if it is necessary that we consult with some comrades, let's consult, and we'll give it the proper shape'. Ibidem.

carious after the Party had started to impose the new canon.[183] But, perhaps more importantly, if the responsibility for the previous Stalinist canon was to be given to ISISP, where would that process stop?

7.5 Conclusions

The sovereign power has the capacity to make and break the law, according to Jean Bodin.[184] But sovereignty needs legitimacy in order to avoid being perceived as despotic and tyrannical.[185] This was understood by Gheorghiu-Dej during the construction of national-communism, which enacted a mimicry of a typical process of modernity, the legitimation through autonomous scholarly institutions. These became instruments by which the management of the cultural discourse was controlled.

Once Ceaușescu assumed power, his need for personal legitimacy *within* the Party (and not among the whole population) reversed partially the trend set by the reaction to the de-Stalinization: the role of ideology, he insisted from 1965, had to be enhanced. The Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia made it possible to capitalize on the popular consent that had been patiently fostered, step by step, by Gheorghiu-Dej. With a renewed emphasis on ideology, the need for the autonomy of non-Party intellectuals and institutions as providers of legitimacy for the leadership gradually diminished.

Instead, the Party proclaimed that it incarnated the common good – therefore, no external institutions or individuals could contribute to developing the message it propagated.[186] The values that the Party chose

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[183] Gheorghe Zaharia is in fact remembered with sympathy by Viorica Moisuc: 'as a real ship commander […] [after 1989 he] made certain that none of the employees at the Institute, from the gate-keeper to researcher, remained "outside" [without work]'; Viorica Moisuc, 'Frânturi din viața unui bun prieten și coleg – așa cum am conoscut-o', in Silviu Miloiu (ed.), *România în relațiile internaționale. Diplomație, minorități, istorie. In honorem Ion Calafeteanu* (Târgoviște: Cetatea de Scaun, 2010), 23–41, 24.

[184] Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 103.

[185] See Bossy, 184–185; see also John Bossy, *Peace in the Post-Reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 34.

[186] The Party could in fact dictate which values to follow, despite Verdery's accredits that 'the Party could not simply appropriate them [the identity questions incorporated into the discourse of the nation], and wave them around at will'. Verdery, *National Ideology*, 125–126. She considered that the regime had limited agency in imposing its values: 'I see the national ideology that became a hallmark of Ceaușescu's Romania as having several sources, only one of which was its purposeful strumentalization by the Party. To a

actively to promote were contained in its propaganda texts. The canon, written in the previous years by a collaboration between the leadership, the propagandists, and the historians, became fixed. The canon described the sovereign power as the common good, sacred as the state for Jean Bodin.[187] What the regime set up, at the beginning of the seventies, was the dispositive[188] in order to allow this knowledge to be better controllable, in order to propagate the new sacralised discourse quickly and efficiently.

Instead of excluding those institutions and individuals, a new organization of science and scholarship subordinated them under Party control, concluding a process of inclusion of the bodies and the discourses already begun in 1955, but also completing that process of deprivation of autonomous knowledge begun in 1948. This reorganization of science and scholarship was expressly made in order to better ensure the ideological cohesion of the culture produced, reducing any possibility of conducting autonomous scholarly research and domesticizing it in the field of propaganda.

Due to these political changes, ISISP gradually prospered. In 1961-1964 it produced less legitimacy than its autonomous Academy competitors; therefore it was not prioritized. But, from 1966, with the rediscovered importance of Party ideology, ISISP was empowered and expanded in terms of both personnel and competences. Ceaușescu's need for legitimacy within the Party was probably the main cause of this empowerment. Within the Institute, many of the veterans and propagandists had no close links with the new leader. With this empowerment, in 1966, the legitimacy of Ceaușescu as the undisputed leader was secured within the Institute. The successive partial reorganization of ISISP implemented by the leadership between 1968 and 1970 was therefore welcomed.[189]

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considerable extent, I argue, the Party was forced (not unwillingly) under pressure from others, especially intellectuals'; ibid., 122.

[187] According to Bossy, for Bodin the state was 'an absolute majesty, perpetual and inviolable, whose commands were irresistible: basically, […] it was a sacred entity'. Bossy, *L'Occidente cristiano*, 184, 200.

[188] 'The term "apparatus" [from the French *dispositive*, used by Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, cit.] designates that [instrument] in which and through which, one realizes a pure activity of governance devoid of any foundation in being. This is the reason why apparatuses must always imply a process of subjectification, that is to say, they must produce their subject'. G. Agamben, *What is an apparatus?* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), 11.

[189] Iacob, *Stalin, the Historians*, cit. maintains that the construction process of the national-communist historiographical canon was finished around 1966. According to

Since the Party now monopolized the cultural field, young scholars and activists were redirected from the state institutions to the Party institutions and to newly founded army institutions for historical research. In 1970, ISISP was given the right to confer doctoral degrees, while the Centre for Military Theory and History started to co-opt graduate historians. Therefore, the competition for valuable scholars was shifted from Party versus non-Party institutions to a competition between Party institutions. The Party had given up seeking legitimation from Academia – it included its most precious institutions in its ranks, *pretending* legitimation was Party duty, after 1970.

Those who agreed to work at ISISP had to pay a price. The principles of hierarchization of their activity pertained to an intersection of the fields of history-writing and propaganda: they had to follow the rules of both, as Popescu-Puțuri told them in 1970. In this sense, a basic distinction between the ISISP historians and the Iorga Institute historians continued to exist, and is still traceable in the memoirs of the latter, where the ISISP historians are accused of not being historians. Still, both groups collaborated on the same projects without questioning too openly their respective statuses, at that time.

However, changing the historiographical canon was anything but simple for the ISISP historians. The difficulties that ensued when trying to revise their own previous historiography was a clear sign of the contradictions that the whole national culture encountered under communism. Revising the past would mean admitting responsibility for previous mistakes and misjudgements No one wanted to be landed with the responsibility implied by the two "Ştefan Muşat" articles. Since both the Party and ISISP were responsible for the historiography now under criticism, this matter proved impossible to handle. The fixation of the canon also resulted in the impossibility of carrying out revision. Nevertheless, the lack of revision did not prevent the progressive idolatrizing of the canon (and of its "heroes" Ceauşescu, the Party, and the nation) by mixed networks of historians and propagandists, which struggled for resources and positions in the last 15 years of the sultanizing regime.

my interpretation, it actually continued until 1974. The whole process of reorganization of scholarship, which began in 1965–1966, had actually a deep impact on the fixation of the canon, just as the reorganization of science and scholarship in 1955–1956 had on the potentiation of the discourse of national-communism developed between 1961 and 1964.

At the mercy of power networks. ISISP in the 'closed horizon', 1974–1989

During Romania's period of late communism, the cultural politics in general and historiography in particular were marked by conflicts between different networks associated with the propaganda apparatus of the Party and the army, and with the history-writing institutions. Previous research has pinpointed the growth of nationalist tendencies in this period in Party historiography, relating them to the struggle for resources among the historians of the Academy and the consequent adoption of these ideas by the Party historians and the propaganda apparatus and (also) to the entry of a new actor in the history-writing milieu, Ilie Ceauşescu.[1]

Nevertheless, no real attention has been given to ISISP and its position during the last decade and a half of the regime. In this chapter, the following questions will be asked: what general development occurred in the cultural politics during this period and what position was taken by ISISP? To what extent did the struggle between competing networks in the cultural field influence the historiographical discourse? What specific characteristics did the historical writings produced at ISISP assume?

8.1 The cultural politics of a 'closed horizon'

From 1974, the ideological diktats left little space for historical research that was not connected to the political aims of the regime. Historian Alexander Zub uses the image of a 'closed horizon' to describe the history-writing

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[1] Deletant, 'Rewriting the past', 64–86.

panorama of Romania in the 1980s.[2] Zub depicts this historiography as haunted by 'new dogmatic and mythologizing tendencies of nationalist quality',[3] since Stalinism had returned 'imposing an exaggerated cult of the leader' and 'the nation became the first topic of research, the old heroes were evoked as ancestors of the communist regime. Longer ancestry and greater importance were discovered [regarding Romanians] than was known about the neighbouring peoples'.[4] The Party-state apparatus of pro-paganda incessantly repeated slogans celebrating Ceaușescu, the Romanian nation, the CC, the army, the noble heritage of the past, and the conquests of technique and science in communist Romania.

Historian Vlad Georgescu, in his *History and Politics*,[5] indicated that the type of history produced in communist Romania had no question marks in its intensions, no character of doubt or limitation in its methodology and empirical efforts, and no nuances in its conclusions. On the contrary, that kind of history was rhetorical and selective, its concepts changed meaning according to the political moment; the history was described by Georgescu as 'euphoric, commemorative, innocent and at the same time, primordial'.[6]

Georgescu's conclusions about the obsession with history reflect the philosophical analysis that an Italian philosopher, Furio Jesi, published in 1979 on the Italian rightist culture. Jesi considered that the *shape* of Italian rightist culture is a pure bundling of cultural junk in order to obtain the effect of "cultural luxury": words like "high", "ancient", "pure", "noble", or pseudo-concepts like "spirit", "homeland", "Italianity" or "tradition" are in themselves meaningless and provide no basis for critical reflection. Since they are empty in content, these pseudo-ideas can be easily manipulated in the scope of the present.

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[2] Alexandru Zub, *Orizont închis. Istoriografia română sub dictatură* (Iași: Institutul European, 2000).
[3] Ibid., 13.
[4] Ibid., 83.
[5] Vlad Georgescu, *Istorie și politică. Cazul comuniștilor români, 1944–1977* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1990), 107: 'All cultural activities have made history the main element of propaganda. [...] History invades the press, the radio and television programmes, the theatre halls, the cinemas, the libraries, popular music, the art galleries. Each and every moment of the present is linked to the past, deep roots are sought in a remote past, each and every realization is presented as an ultimate conquest of a long historical evolution. The present is legitimized through the past, historical legacy becomes an obsession'. The book was written in 1977 and published in Munich in 1981, after Georgescu had fled the country.
[6] Ibid., 119–120.

In Jesi's analysis, these words were a way to express 'wordless ideas', an expression used by Oswald Spengler in 1933: 'That which we have in our blood by inheritance – namely, wordless ideas – are the only things that give permanence to our future'.[7] Jesi was referring to characters like Julius Evola, an Italian populariser (and trivializer) of late nineteenth and twentieth century conservative philosophers, but also to Romanian intellectuals such as Mircea Eliade.[8]

Jesi's approach appears to be rather similar to Georgescu's analysis of the Romanian communist historiography. The creation of a national meta-narrative canon making the nation a focal point of the historical narratives, and its synthesis with the ideology of Marxism-Leninism, meant that the Romanian nation was projected ever more backward in time. While at the beginning of the 1960s the nineteenth century was in focus, by the end of the decade the Romanian nation had been projected backward to medieval times. Soon the "origin" of the Romanian nation was sought in antiquity and, from the mid-1970s, in the origin of world civilization.[9]

From 1974, the same music was played, with more frequent ostinatos and crescendos, insisting for example on the positive role of the nation and the national heroes. It is impossible to distinguish any actual ideological development in the cultural politics after 1974. This image, the *closed horizon*, is therefore a fitting depiction of the general state of Romania's cultural politics between 1974 and 1989.

From 1974, the official cultural politics constantly repeated the same messages, which were stressed with increasing insistence, brutality, and megalomania,[10] while at the same time being received with a growing impatience and incredulity among Romanian intellectuals and abroad. The more history was invoked in support of the regime, the more it was subjected to strict political control.[11] Since the cultural politics proposed in-

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[7] Oswald Spengler, *The Hour of Decision*, 1933, xiii, quoted in Franco Ferraresi, *Threat to Democracy: The Radical Right in Italy after the War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 261 n1.

[8] Furio Jesi, *Cultura di destra* (Milan: Garzanti Publishing, 1979).

[9] Georgescu, *Politica și istorie*, 111.

[10] Zoe Petre attributes this involution in search of a past full of glory to the 'enormous frustration' of the regime and its leaders. Zoe Petre, 'Burebista contemporanul nostru', *Observator Cultural* (79/2001), available on http://www.observatorcultural.ro/Burebista-contemporanul-nostru*articleID_1496-articles_details.html

[11] Alexandru Florin-Platon, 'Fețele lui Ianus: Istoriografia română la sfârșit și începtul de secol', *Anuarul Institutul Cercetări Socio-Umane Gheorghe Șincai al Academiei Române* III–IV (2000–2001), 7–22; 13–14.

cessantly the reminiscences of a remote past that could *praise* the leader, even basic tenets of Marxism-Leninism were seen as redundant. For example, the vision of history as a succession of societal stages was essentially lost, with the consequence that the distinction between past and present disappeared and was replaced by eternal repetition. As noted by Pavel Câmpeanu, eviscerated of its substance, history became a-temporal and characterised by perpetual immobility[12] and, as put by Katherine Verdery, time was étatized – that is, the state became the owner of time.[13]

As a consequence of this flattening of historical time, in 1980, at the World Congress of the Historical Studies Society held in Bucharest, the community of the historians celebrated the 2 050-year commemoration of the creation of the Daco-Roman Centralised State.[14] Burebista, the Dacian king, in this manner became contemporary to Ceaușescu.[15] As a second consequence, the eulogy of the 'wordless ideas' became a preferred activity among careerist historians and propagandists. The most important pseudo-concept of these wordless ideas was the nation, described as ancient, unchanged, independent, and united. According to the official story-line, the Romanian state had ancient origins, and was necessary for the preservation of the nation, which was surrounded by hostile neighbouring states (mainly Hungary and Russia). Safeguarding the state and the nation was Nicolae Ceaușescu, who assumed an increasingly symbolic importance after his 'coronation' as president in 1974.

Ceaușescu's speeches became a necessary reference for the historians writing on the workers' movement and the Party, culminating with his coronation as leading historian in 1988, with the publication of *The History of the Romanian People in the Conception of President Nicolae Ceaușescu*, edited by Ion Popescu-Puțuri. Many networks profited from this trend and competed fiercely for resources and recognition, since the leadership was ostentatiously rewarding those who praised it. In practice, since the cultural politics were no longer instruments in the search for legitimacy but simply instruments for praising the leadership and the Party as defenders of the nation, many could profit from the sclerosis of the regime and gain benefits

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[12] Pavel Câmpeanu, *The origins of Stalinism. From Leninist Revolution to Stalinist Society* (New York: Sharpe, 1986), 22.

[13] Katherine Verdery, *National Ideology under Socialism*, 250; see also Verdery, *What Was Socialism and What Comes Next* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 39–57.

[14] Zub, 82.

[15] The expression is taken from Zoe Petre, 'Burebista, contemporanul nostru', cit.

by proposing new and increasingly extreme forms of nationalist celebration and veneration of the leader.

This cultural and political landscape started to be shaped in 1974, with *The RCP Program to Favour the Socialist Multilaterally Developed Society and the Way of Romania towards Communism*, which was approved by acclamation by the 11th Congress of the RCP in 1974. In its first part, the program included a 38-page condensed history of Romania, from ancient Dacia until the present. Here the Dacians and Burebista appeared for the very first time in a Party document.[16] 'Small state formations', 'voivodats', feudal states and the free peasants, and their *conducători*, were considered defenders of the homeland integrity.[17] In short:

> The entire history of the Romanian people depicts the history of unceasing class struggles, of battles fought by the popular masses for freedom and social rights, for the defence of national essence and independence, for progress and civilization.[18]

The novelty of this document is that it contained a Party-endorsed matrix by which Romanian history should be read. The historical "essay" stressed the importance of four cornerstones of the meta-narrative canon advocated by the regime: the ancient origins of the Romanian people; the continuity of the Romanians in the present territory of Romania from ancient times to the present; the unity of the Romanian people throughout their history; and the constant fight of the Romanian people for their independence.[19]

A sense of exaggeration is evident if the text is compared with the previous congress programs from 1965 and 1969. This sense of exaggeration and budding megalomania was the first concretization of the 'closed

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[16] Partidul Comunist Român, *Programul Partidul Comunist Român de făurire a societății socialiste multilateral dezvoltate și înaintare a României spre communism* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1975), 27–28: the 'Thracian-Dacian state organization […] had its culminating point in the period of Burebista and Decebal', whose greatness was later destroyed in the war with the Romans and the consequent transformation of Dacia into a province of the Roman empire. Thus a new civilization was created that eventually declined with the decadence of the Roman empire, leaving 'on this territory an unorganized state', at the mercy of 'migratory peoples' who threatened the Daco-Romans who 'had to put up a fierce and daily fight […] to ensure the continuity of the territory in which they were born'.

[17] Ibid., 28–29.

[18] Ibid., 29.

[19] Dragos Petrescu, 'Historical Myths, Legitimating discourses, and Identity politics in Ceaușescu's Romania', *East European Perspectives* 6/7, (2004).

horizon', which for the regime meant the ultimate form of control.[20] The document was written by people in the Propaganda Section together with ISISP historians, but it remains unclear exactly who devised and finalized the narrative.[21]

This fixed canon was meant to fill with significance not only the works of the historians, but also historical education and the popularisation of a number of other propaganda instruments which were created at the same time: new cultural-educational organizations,[22] museums,[23] new popular festivals and activities,[24] new centres for containing the hippie and rock cul-

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[20] This does not mean that Ceauşescu's speeches on history were over: for example, he presented a short version of the history of the Romanian people from the Dacian times to the present day in 1976 at the Congress for political and socialist culture education [and printed in RCP, *Congresul educaţiei politice şi al culturii socialiste, 2–4 iunie 1976* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1976), 17–26]; in May 1977, on the occasion of the centenary anniversary of Romania's independence, he made a long speech on Romanian history – also on this occasion, starting from the Dacian times [*Expunere prezentată la sesiunea solemnă comună a comitetului central al partidul comunist roman, marii adunări naţionale şi activului central de partid şi stat consacrată sărbătoririi centenarului proclamării independenţei de stat a României*, in Nicolae Ceauşescu, *România pe drumul construirii societăţii socialiste multilateral dezvoltate*, vol. 14, (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1977), 316–355]; see also Andreea Lupşor, 'PCR scrie istoria României. Cum a decis regimul comunist variant oficială a istoriei naţionale', *Historia.ro*, 14 July 2014, available on http://www.historia.ro/exclusiv_web/general/articol/pcr-scrie-istoria-rom-niei-cum-decis-regimul-comunist-varianta-oficial

[21] As I wrote in the previous chapter, Ion Bulei believes that he took part in the editing of those pages, but is not quite certain, since the responsibility for the work was laid in someone else's hands. Source: interview with Ion Bulei, February 12th 2013.

[22] *Cămine culturale* and *case de cultură* in communes and workplaces set up by local Party sections. Furthermore, a workers' university, a choir, a music band, a ballet, a section for propaganda art and at least three artistic and technical schools were instituted. The decree ordered the building of libraries, museums, theatres, art schools and cultural associations. See Claudiu Oancea, 'Building Charisma by Imagining the Nation: The Case of Nicolae Ceauşescu's Socialist Romania', conference paper presented at the Conference «Nation and Charisma», London School of Economics, 13-15th April 2010, 11–12. Available on http://www.hks.harvard.edu/kokkalis/gsw/2009/Leadership/Oancea,%20Claudiu%20 paper%20and%20bio.pdf (last visualization June 20, 2015).

[23] The new Museum of National History was opened in Bucharest in 1972, and many local museums were reopened or reorganized, like the Union Museum in Alba Iulia (1975) and the Museum "Struggle for National Independence" in Giurgiu (1977). The local museums assumed great importance in the propaganda apparatus due to the subsidies received by the regime in order to edit and publish periodical publications meant to spread the historical narrative throughout the country.

[24] Dragos Petrescu, 'Historical Myths, Legitimating discourses, and identity politics in Ceauşescu's Romania', cit.: Another activity that was devised in 1974 was the popular song festival *Cântareă României*, which officially started in 1976 and continued until 1989. At the same time, the regime initiated a sports competition called *Daciadă*. Both activities were aimed at strengthening the ethnic ties within the population. *Cântarea*

ture,[25] new measures for educating children[26] and for shaping the future elite according to the Party's ideology.[27] Furthermore, television and radio broadcasts were another fundamental part of the regime's propaganda apparatus,[28] together with the cinema.[29]

României was projected to be a large cultural umbrella for a great number of cultural activities that had been initiated since 1976. All kinds of cultural events could be included in this festival – if they praised the leader, the nation, and the unity between state and Party. Both professional performers and amateurs took part, wishing to entertain and be entertained in a country that did not have many cultural venues to offer outside the official channels. And, at least until the early 1980s, there were still no economic privations, and the propaganda machine was relatively efficient.

[25] The regime also considered the younger generation, and instituted the *Cenaclul a tineretului revoluționar flacăra*, a powerful, regime-financed association run by poet Adrian Păunescu that mixed rock music and homeland-praising poetry. The propaganda also worked with such methods: preventing the development of a real rock or hippie counter-culture that was spreading elsewhere in Eastern Europe, it contributed to preventing the formation of dissidence. See T. Mitchell, 'Mixing Pop and Politics. Rock Music in Czechoslovakia before and after the Velvet Revolution', *Popular Music* 11 (2/1992), 187–203.

[26] The Party, seeking to expand its influence in the domain of youth education, gave solid support to the Pioneers of Romania association, and created in 1977, actually something unique in an Eastern European socialist country, an organization for patriotic and Party education of children between the ages of four and seven, *Șoimii Patriei* (*Homeland Falcons*); see PCR, *Regulament organizației Șoimii Patriei*, (Bucharest, 1977). See also the discussions in the Secretariat on the organization, published in Revista 22 Plus, 'Arhivele comunismului – Presa pentru copii', *Revista 22 Plus*, 268, 3 February 2009, available on http://www.revista22.ro/22-plus-anul-xvi-nr-268-iii-arhivele-comunismului-presa-pentru-copii-5551.html

[27] From 1977, all universities were obliged to have a course on the problems of national history and the RCP, with a compulsory textbook: Mircea Mușat, Nicolae Petreanu, Ion Sârzea, Vasile Smârcea, Gheorghe Zaharia (eds), *Probleme fundamentale ale istoriei patriei și partidului comunist român* (Bucharest: Editura Didactică și Pedagogică, 1977). Before the textbook became compulsory, a manual edited in form of questions and answers was distributed in 1974: ISISP, *Întrebări și răspunduri pe teme din istoria P.C.R. și a mișcării muncitorești din România* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1974).

[28] Vlad Georgescu recollects that in 1977 there could be many programs on historical topics on the very same day – this was the case for the broadcasts dedicated to the union of 1918, where there were 17 broadcasts in total, three on television and 14 on the radio, in one single day; Georgescu, *Istorie și politică*, 107.

[29] Sergiu Nicolaescu was the main director in this new ideological cinema: his first colossal movie was *The Dacians* (1967), shot with historians Constantin Daicoviciu and his son Hadrian as consultants. The latter also served as a consultant for the sequel *The Column* (1968), on the history depicted on the Trajan Column. However, Nicolaescu's greatest success was *Michael the Brave* (*Mihail Viteazul*), shot in 1969, with the help of Andrei Oțetea and Constantin C. Giurescu. The production of films of this kind continued in the 1980s with *Burebista* by Gheorghe Vanatidis (1980), *Horea* by Mircea Mureșan (1984), and *Mircea* by S.Nicolaescu (1989). These films were shown in collective compulsory screenings to school pupils all over Romania and became very

All this powerful machinery of propaganda had solidified the meta-narrative canon: evidence of this is the absence of even small or marginal changes in the official ideology endorsed between 1974 and 1989.[30] Once *the form* of the new national-communist canon was fixed, and the notion established that "the ideological level of the whole population should be raised", the regime and its intellectuals could only decide to exploit to a major degree, magnify, and exaggerate the already-known *content*.

Ceaușescu had no rivals. Year after year, the 'closed horizon' favoured the elevation of the leader.[31] The only attack he received was in 1979, when veteran Constantin Pîrvulescu argued against the re-election procedure of Ceaușescu as Party leader, since it was done by simple ratification without any kind of previous discussion. This, in Pîrvulescu's words, was 'without precedent in the history of our Party and in the history of the communist parties […] since Ceaușescu did not submit himself to the control of the Party'.[32] Pîrvulescu's speech was immediately countered by Party veterans Leonte Răutu, Gheorghe Macovescu, and Ion Popescu-Puțuri. The latter, in particular, praised the leader beyond limits, receiving applause from the audience. Pîrvulescu, former director of the Party History Institute, was removed from the Party, while Ceaușescu was supported by its new director, Popescu-Puțuri.

A consequence of the gradually closing horizon was the magnification of nationalism, which assumed very peculiar trends: autochtonist, still anti-Soviet, but also anti-Western. In 1974, art and aesthetics historian Edgar

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popular. See Aurelia Vasile, *Le cinéma roumain dans le période communiste. Représen-tations de l'histoire nationale*, doctoral dissertation (Bourgogne: University of Bourgog-ne, 2011), 400-438.

[30] I.e., in 1989, the Theses of the 14th Congress still reported large sections dedicated to 'the Millenary Struggle of the Romanian People for the Social and National Freedom, for Independence and Unity', but with no changes from the historical theses of 1974. See RCP, *Tezele pentru Congresul al XIV-lea al Partidului Comunist Român* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1989), 9.

[31] In 1978, the pop-art pieces dedicated to the leader in the form of poetry, tales, paintings, and songs had idolizing titles like the "wise helmsman", "visionary leader", "brilliant strategist", "brave ensign", "our hero", "hero of the nation", "tireless hero", "the greatest hero among heroes", "world peace hero", "Carpathian shield", "living symbol of aspi-rations", "the great tribune of the people", "enlightened son of the country", "modern titan", "great contemporary", "founder of socialist Romania"; Adrian Cioroianu, 'Cine a profitat de cultul lui Ceaușescu?', *Historia.ro*, 18 May 2010, available on http://www.historia.ro/exclusiv_web/general/articol/cine-profitat-cultul-lui-ceau-escu

[32] It is worth noting that in order to counter a veteran's speech, three other veterans were required to intervene. Bosomitu, 'Constantin Pârvulescu', cit.

Papu, writing in an article, defined protochronism as 'one of the dominant and defining traits of our literature in the global context'.[33] The core of the idea, expressed in a book he published in 1977, was that 'any number of Romanian literary developments chronologically precede similar achievements in other countries'.[34] This line of thought permitted conservative tendencies and provincialism to be expressed in literary works.[35] Protochronism was used in order to hierarchize world culture, setting Romanian culture on a superior level.

Romanian researchers then had to relate the universal values to their Romanian perspective, and conclude that when compared, the Romanian culture was superior, an anticipator of progress and novelties.[36] This was a mode of thought previously endorsed in the Stalinist Soviet Union, where the idea of temporal precedence was forcefully advocated. According to this tenet, most of the inventions that had changed the course of history had their origin in Russia, having been devised by Russian geniuses.[37] Similarly, in Romania a general anti-Western set of ideas was displayed in parallel to the consolidated anti-Sovietism / Russophobia.

As a consequence for the history discipline, 'two millennia of history [went] hand in hand in order to legitimize the socialist *Conducător* of the present',[38] and the *culturnici* chose to secure their positions by favouring this trend. It was in the fissures of the Ceauşescu family *clan*, with its gradual possession of various functions and honours, that the *culturnici* found a niche when competing for personal advantage within the Party, in various branches of the state, in the army, and throughout the country.[39]

[33] Edgard Papu, 'Protocronismul Românesc', *Secolul 20* 5–6 (1974), 8–11.
[34] Edgard Papu, *Din clasicii noştri. Contribuţii la ideea unui protocronism românesc*, Editura Eminescu, Bucureşti, 1977; quoted in Anneli Maier, 'Romanian "Protochronism" and New Cultural Order', Radio Free Europe fund, b. 52–55, f. 9, 16th November 1977, 1–6. Available online on http://files.osa.ceu.hu/holdings/300/8/3/text/52-5-9.shtml (last visualization October 2nd, 2012).
[35] Ibidem.
[36] Ibidem.
[37] Medvedev, *Stalin sconosciuto*, 296–307.
[38] Cioroianu, 'Cine a profitat', cit.
[39] 'Despite the fact that nepotism in the communist world is not such an uncommon factor and everywhere the Party leaders have given their family members privileged positions, Ceausescu is something special. Since taking over the leadership he has never made a secret of his familial favouritism. In addition to his wife Elena and son Nicu, other relatives were swiftly promoted to key state and Party positions. His brothers are strategically placed in the army, security, planning, agriculture, and even the mass media'; Rene de Flers, 'Biographical Sketches of the Ceauşescu clan', Radio Free Europe,

8.2 Competing networks of history-writing, 1974–1989

During this period, history-writing was characterised by both large-scale projects supported by the regime and by more modest personal contributions. I will here try to describe the dynamics of Romanian historiography in the 1980s in order to depict the general landscape of which ISISP constituted an integral part. However, this is not an easy matter. The archive of ISISP is still partially unavailable, and scholarly analyses of the Institute are virtually non-existent. Moreover, witness accounts are problematic to use due to the temporal proximity of the subject. This means that reconstructing the position of ISISP and its historians in the historiographic field can only be done in an indirect way.

Part of the history of this historiography actually started in 1975 in San Francisco, USA, at the 14th Congress of Historical Sciences. The committee decided that the next Congress should be held in Bucharest in 1980 – a great opportunity for the regime. The 38-page short history of the RCP program from 1974 was destined to become the core of a new large-scale project supported by the regime for that special occasion, resulting in a new synthesis of Romanian history. The projected first three volumes of this new synthesis would be presented simultaneously with the history congress, where every foreign participant would also receive a compendium on Romanian history in order to maximize the propaganda effect.

Apart from the problems connected to the organization of the congress (security, propaganda, and the control of the historical theses expressed by Romanian and foreign participants), the problem immediately raised was the canon the new synthesis should adhere to. The Academy of Socio-Political Sciences became directly involved in these matters, while ISISP contributed by including in each number of *Anale de Istorie* a section dedicated to national history. A new commission at the Propaganda Section of the CC was also formed to deal with this issue. The participants in this commission comprised representatives from the Iorga Institute (Florin

Romania, RAD Background Report/135, 27th July 1984, available on https://web.archive.org/web/20071231073818/http://files.osa.ceu.hu/holdings/300/8/3/text/53-6-20.shtml As Gail Kligman has noted, at the beginning of the eighties 'political-educational campaigns paralleled political moves by the extended ruling family to consolidate power. In part, the public promotion of women (and of youth) served to legitimate a first step in the creation of "socialism in one family" – the Ceauşescu family'; Gail Kligman, *The Politics of Duplicity: Controlling Reproduction in Ceauşescu's Romania* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 130.

Constantiniu), the Academy (Nicolae N. Constantinescu) and ISISP (Gheorghe Zaharia and Nicolae Copoiu). Florin Constantiniu recollects that the discussions were 'sterile',[40] since Zaharia and the other propagandists did not accept any of the alterations suggested by the Academy historians.

The content of the projected synthesis followed the disposition of two important historiographical volumes, namely *The History of Romania in Dates*, edited by Constantin C. Giurescu,[41] and *History of the World in Dates*, edited by Andrei Oțetea.[42]

The work of the Iorga Institute historians on the synthesis was concentrated on some historiographical works that became fundamental instruments, like the *Encyclopedia of Romanian historiography* edited by Ştefan Ştefanescu in 1978,[43] a work that until recently was the only one of this kind, but also a unique instrument to detect the impact of the regime's vulgate on historiography. Here, beside the professional historians, appeared propagandists without formal training but who still participated in the history-writing domain, together with Party veterans, and Ceauşescu himself, who was depicted in a biographical sketch of four pages.[44] In 1979, ISISP highlighted the role of the leader and his importance in historiography in the very first work of historiographical sultanism: *History of the Homeland and of the Romanian Communist Party in the Work of President Nicolae Ceauşescu*, a collection of Ceauşescu's statements on Romanian history that later proved useful for historians when referring to quotes from the leader.[45]

[40] Constantiniu, *De la Răutu şi Roller*, 372.

[41] Constantin C. Giurescu, *Istoria României în date* (Bucharest: Editura Ştiinţifică şi Enciclopedică, 1972).

[42] Andrei Oțetea (ed.), *Istoria lumii în date* (Bucharest: Editura Ştiinţifică şi Enciclopedică, 1969). Quoted in Stan, *Politica şi istorie,* 287.

[43] Ştefanescu, *Enciclopedia,* cit.

[44] Ibid., 89–92. According to A. Stan, the *Enciclopedia* may 'misinform' in many cases; A. Stan, *Politica şi istorie,* 290. Also in my experience, in many cases, the *Enciclopedia* is unreliable and its information needs to be double-checked. Despite these limitations, it remains to date the best instrument when investigating Romanian communist historiography, even if many volumes on the topic include in their appendixes short detailed biographies of the protagonists of the events; see, i.e., three very different works on the topic, which stress the importance of retrieving the biographical data of the historical characters, the works of S. Stoica, (*Istoriografia românească*) Constantiniu "(De la Răutu şi Roller, cit.)", Tismăneanu (*Gheorghiu-Dej,* cit.).

[45] Nicolae Ceauşescu, *Istoria patriei şi a Partidului Comunist Român în opera preşedintelui Nicolae Ceauşescu* (Bucharest: Editura Militară, 1979). 'We consider that the editing of the synthesis of history of Romania and of the Romanian Communist Party must be based on the indications contained in this volume', Popescu-Puţuri stated

The manuscript of the synthesis benefited also from recent findings on national history made by a group of young ISISP researchers recruited from the mid-1960s. However, the projected synthesis was never presented at the 1980 congress in Bucharest, since it was rejected by the Propaganda Section. How can this be explained? Was Clio at the mercy of Party strategies, or was its writing also influenced by the careerism of the propagandists? This is a difficult question. Mircea Muşat, a propaganda official, and Ion Ardeleanu, director of the Museum for Party History, in fact formed a powerful duo who, using professional malpractices and heading a powerful network of historians and propagandists, succeeded in acquiring prime positions in terms of resources and publication grants in the Romanian history-writing milieu. Several historians testify, and also mention in their memoirs, that 'they always appeared together, like the Petreuş Brothers', a popular folk music duo in communist Romania.[46] Muşat and Ardeleanu's method to obtain power in the field of history-writing was to marginalize whoever opposed or dared to criticize them, and to publish works insisting that these constituted 'fundamental' bibliographical references. Historian Florin Constantiniu blames them for the failure of the synthesis. In his memoirs, he claims that the negative reviews of the first volume of the synthesis and the short compendium were organized by Muşat and Ardeleanu, who instructed the four reviewers of the Propaganda Section to harshly criticize the manuscript and label it as "anti-national" and "pro-Soviet".[47] The failure of the first volume would have put an end to the large-scale synthesis project in its current form, and instead would have given Muşat and Ardeleanu the opportunity to take over and oversee the production of a different historical work. This interpretation would explain how Muşat and Ardeleanu became, from 1983, the two most powerful historians in Romania. But there are also other interpretations of the failure of the synthesis.

before Romanian historians in the presence of Ceauşescu on 27 May 1980, when discussing the strategy at the approaching Congress: CC al PCR – Secţia Propagandă şi Agitaţie, 23/1980, *Stenograma întîlnirii de lucru de la CC al PCR cu reprezentanţi ai oamenilor de ştiinţă din domeniul istoriei*, ff. 1–53; f. 21.

[46] This "label" on Muşat and Ardeleanu was common: Interview with Şerban Papacostea, interview with Ion Bulei; in literature, F. Constantiniu, *de la Răutu*, 379.

[47] Constantiniu, *de la Răutu*, 380. A colleague, Constantiniu adds, told him that Dionise Pippidi, historian and responsible for the first volume, exaggerated the role of the Greek colonization in Dobrogea and the influence of the Greek civilization on the Geto-Dacians – due to the fact that he had Greek origins (ibid., 380).

The Iorga Institute historian Şerban Papacostea mentions only briefly that the main reason for the failure was 'the efforts of propagandists to force protochronist theses into the development of this huge project […] [this became] a source of dissension between the professional historians and the Party apparatus'.[48] In this case, the contraposition would not be between different Party networks, but between the professional historians and the Party.

Another historian at the Iorga Institute, Apostol Stan, does not accept this interpretation. According to Stan, the role of Muşat and Ardeleanu in the failure of the synthesis should not be overrated: it simply 'was not the case' that these *culturnici* had such power.[49] Instead, he maintains that 'they [the Party] were not satisfied with its content'.[50] For Stan, Muşat and Ardeleanu 'did not promote their own politics, but those of the RCP'.[51]

While it was certainly the case that they did not have absolute power, their respective positions as a high-level propagandist (Muşat) and as director of the Party History Museum (Ardeleanu) clearly allowed them to establish relationships of patronage and clientelism. It is more reasonable to conclude that Muşat and Ardeleanu had no major role in the collapse of the synthesis project, but they were nevertheless later able to have their own works elevated to the position of 'unofficial' regime-supported historical narratives.[52]

Despite the "collapse" of the synthesis project, the 1980 Congress was successful with regard to the regime's propagandistic aims. This event allowed hundreds of foreign historians to visit Bucharest, giving the regime an opportunity to propagate the official theories concerning the 2,050th anniversary of the foundation of the Dacian state, and also to convey an image of Romania as a liberal country. Organizational matters were closely scrutinized by the leader: the Party and state commission for the organization of the congress included both Nicolae and Elena Ceauşescu, and the top of the Party hierarchy.[53] The Romanian committee of historians

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[48] Papacostea, *Captive Clio,* 196.
[49] Stan, *Istorie şi politica*, 287.
[50] Ibid., 286.
[51] Ibidem.
[52] See the list of the authors, secretaries, and editors of the ten volumes in CC al PCR – Secţia Propagandă şi Agitaţie, 11/1980, *Lista cuprinzînd responsabilii, secretarii şi alţi autori ai celor zece volume ale Tratatului de istorie a României*, ff. 34–43.
[53] The other members were Virgil Cazacu, Paul Niculescu-Mizil, Dumitru Popescu, Gheorghe Rădulescu, Leonte Răutu, Ştefan Voitec, Ilie Rădulescu. ANIC, CC al PCR – Secţia Propagandă şi Agitaţie, 11/1980, f. 2.

responsible for organizing the congress was composed of top-level academic historians, while the ISISP historians had only a minor influence on the committee decisions.[54] The efforts to synchronize propagandists and historians had never before been so efficient: the main controversies between the representatives of the Romanian and foreign historiographies ('Soviet', 'Bulgarian, Czechoslovak, Polish, Yugoslavian, Hungarian, East German, French, British', 'of the socialist countries') were indicated briefly in secret documents in order to better prepare responses.[55] Since the regime was also interested in ensuring that its historiographical theses were not criticized, it analysed the numerical participation of the world's historians at the Congress and anticipated that attacks could come not only from Soviet historians, but also from the pro-Soviet Bulgarians, who were 100 in number (while 114 belonged to the Soviet Union, and 86 to the USA).[56] The

[54] Ion Popescu-Puțuri and Gheorghe Unc were the only ISISP members on the committee (of 20), and held no important positions: neither the vice-presidency (Ladislau Banyai, Emil Condurachi, Mircea Popescu-Dâmbovița, Ștefan Ștefanescu), nor the presidency (Ștefan Pașcu), nor the secretary position (Dan Berindei). ANIC, CC al PCR – Secția Propagandă și Agitație, 11/1980, f. 7–9.

[55] For example, an internal document reports: '8. The secession of Moldavia in 1812. Through the annexation of Bessarabia by Tsarist Russia, [it] is considered by Soviet historiography as a progressive act, that ensured: the liberation of this part of the Moldavian people from the Ottoman yoke, the economic development of the region, the development of capitalist relationships and, implicitly, of the workers' movement, the latter under the influence of the socialist and workers' movement of Russia'; ANIC, CC al PCR – Secția Propagandă și Agitație, 11/1980, *Unele puncte de vedere ale istoriografiei straine cu privire la unele probleme ale istoriei poporului roman*, ff. 8–12; f. 10. Another example: '18. The character and the orientation of the foreign policy of Romania between the two world wars. According to the theory that Romania was a state created by the imperialist powers of the Entente through the peace treaties of Paris, it is considered in Soviet, Bulgarian, Hungarian, and East German historiography that the main aim of the Romanian foreign policy was to keep the annexed territories. From here, the conclusion that Romania became and acted as an instrument of French politics, seeing in this power the main factor for the maintenance of the annexed provinces' (f. 11); the last example: '24. The liberation of Romania from Fascist domination. The historiography of the socialist countries, and predominantly the Soviet one, claims that Romania was liberated entirely by Soviet troops. The insurrection is limited only to the arrest of the Antonescu government [sic] and, furthermore, to the liberation of Bucharest' (f. 12). Another document reports a list of "controversial" topics, the incorrect theses of 'some historians' on them, and the consequent correct theses of 'other historians'; ANIC, CC al PCR – Secția Propagandă și Agitație, 11/1980, *Unele probleme ale istorie poporului roman controversate pe plan intern*, ff. 27–33.

[56] Statistical information in ANIC, CC al PCR – Secția Propagandă și Agitație, 11/1980, f. 14. The organization committee was reassured that no problem would ensue, in the words of Mihnea Gheorghiu: '100 Romanian historians are ready to intervene in the debates [...] both to clarify some problems in the history of our homeland but also to

Romanian contributions to the conference were strictly controlled by the Propaganda Section:

> …according to the mandate and the indications given by the General Secretary of the Party, comrade Nicolae Ceaușescu, at the discussion with the representatives of the men of science in the domain of history, the delegation of the Romanian historians elaborated all these materials. Their basis has been the theses included in the Program of the Romanian Communist Party, in the work of comrade Nicolae Ceaușescu, in the documents adopted at the 12th congress, in the decisions of the Party regarding the problems of history, regarding the process of development of human society in the territory of our homeland, and in universal history.[57]

The foreign contributions were scrutinized using the same method. Those 'likely to create formidable political problems regarding the history of our homeland and of other people' were relatively rare, but were still listed in an eight-page report. This included the name of the historian proposing the "controversial" thesis, a short description of the thesis itself, and an explicit indication for the Romanian historians on *if* and *how* to respond to it.[58]

According to the recollections of Șerban Papacostea, the Chinese historians proclaimed that 'on 23rd August 1944 the Romanians fought back the tiger from the door but made the hyena enter from the window',[59] thus

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clarify, in the spirit of the given indications, and to fight some incorrect problems [sic] pointed out by foreign historians'. CC al PCR – Secția Propagandă și Agitație, 28/1980, *Stenograma ședinței de lucru a tovarășului Nicolae Ceaușescu, în legătură cu Congresul Internațional de științe istorice*, 5 August 1980, ff. 1–17; f. 2.

[57] ANIC, CC al PCR – Secția Propagandă și Agitație, 25/1980, *Informare privind conținutul conferințelor, rapoartelor și corpoartelor pe care istoricii români le vor prezenta la cel de-al XV-lea Congress international de științe istorice*, ff. 2–6.

[58] CC al PCR – Secția Propagandă și Agitație, 25/1980, *Informare privind unele probleme ridicate în materialele istoricilor străini, care urmează să fie publicate și dezbătute la Congresul Internațional de științe istorice*, ff. 7–15; f. 7. The report insisted on intervening only when national interests were at stake: i.e. regarding US historian Albert Feurerweker's contribution on the marginality of the exploitation dimension of the Western investments in China 'the Romanian intervention is not necessary' (f. 9); they should instead have responded after the interventions of C. E. Thaden (USA), gen. Maselli (Italy), Y. A. Polyakov (Soviet Union), Zs. P. Pach (Hungary), and many others, whose papers regarded also Romania and its position in history. In the case of the Soviet historian S. L. Tikhvinsky, who presented a paper on the correlation of social and national problems in the revolution of Hsinghsi in China (1911–1913) stressing the chauvinist, nationalist and racist theories of some leaders of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in 1911, the Romanian ambassador in Beijing was informed by the Chinese Communist Party that it would be better to 'avoid situations of polemics and tensions' (f. 10).

[59] Interview with Ș. Papacostea by the author, 7th February 2013, Bucharest.

provoking protests from the Soviets. In order to avoid such accidents, the committee had made informal arrangements: the texts of the foreign historians, their statements and comments during the conference were translated and passed to the secret organizing committee whose mission it was to avoid possible incidents: 'it was a constant mobilisation'[60] in order to control the congress, recounts Papacostea, who served as a translator.

At the congress, the non-Party historians had the possibility to present their scholarly contributions, together with those of the Party historians, which were all on contemporary history.[61] No major problems actually

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[60] Ibidem.

[61] The Romanian contributions to the Congress stressed the importance of the ancient Dacian civilization, elevating it to the ranks of the great civilizations of the European past [Emil Condurachi, Răzvan Theodorescu, *L'Europe de L'Est – Aire de convergence des civilisations*, in Comité International des Sciences Historiques (ed.), *Rapports*, Vol. I (*Grand Thèmes et méthodologie*) (Bucharest: Editura Academiei Republicii Socialiste România, 1980), 9–87; Hadrian Daicoviciu, *Les Daces et leur civilisation*, in ibid., vol. II (*Chronologie*), idem, 84–99]. There was also one paper on higher education in the twentieth century [Ş. Ştefanescu, *La place et le role de l'ensignement de l'histoire, dans le cadre de l'ensignement secondaire, notamment pour la formation de l'homme du XXe siècle*, in ibid., vol. I, 488–493], two contributions from Ştefan Pascu on historical demography [Ş. Pascu, *Démographie, épidémies, écologie*, in ibid., vol. I, 669–686; idem, *L'apport de la démographie à l'histoire générale*, in vol. III (*Organismes internationaux affiliés et commissions internes*), 297–322], one paper from the Centre for Military History and Theory on the historical development of relations between the military and society [Alexandru Savu, Eugen Bantea, *Evolution historique du rapport armée-société*, in idem, vol. III, 237–272], one paper on the Enlightenment in Eastern Europe and its political consequences [Alexandru Duţu, Pompiliu Teodor, *Les lumières dans le centre et le sud-est de l'Europe et leurs implications socio-politique*, in idem, vol. II, 380–397] and two contributions on twentieth century history – one on the agrarian reforms in Europe before the First World War, and another on propaganda during the Second World War [Costin Murgescu, Damian Hurezeanu, *Les réformes agraires en Europe après la première guerre mondiale*, in idem, vol. II, 666–689; Ion Popescu-Puţuri, *La propagande pendant les années de la seconde guerre mondiale – méthodes, objectifs, résultats*, in idem, vol. III, 175–192]. Another series of contributions were published after the Congress in a fourth volume [Idem, ibid., vol. IV (1 - *Actes*), in *Avant-propos*. The editing committee of the volume wrote that it had to 'have a vast correspondence with some of the participants in order to receive part of the contributions or to clarify several aspects']. Here, the Romanian contributions dealt with contemporary problems [Constantin Antip, Rodica Şerbanescu, *Les problèmes de la paix et de la guerre dans les dèbats des organisations internationales de la presse et des journalistes* (summary), in idem, Vol. IV; Şerban Rădulescu-Zoner, *La conscience nationale et l'opinion publique de Roumanie: forms d'affirmations en methods préconisées pour l'achèvement de l'èstate national*, in ibidem. Also notable were the contributions by ISISP historians: Ion Iacoş, *La presse, soutien actif de la politique de désarmement promue par la Romanie (1932–1934)* (summary), in ibidem; Ion Spălăţelu, *La condemnation des agressions fascists de la quatrième dècennie du XX siècle dans la presse roumaine*, in idem; Vasile Liveanu, *Stochastic and statistical dependences – a distinction essential in historical research* (sic!), in ibidem].

occurred during the Congress sessions, either at the international level nor concerning Romania, its history, its historians and – most importantly – its leader and his political position. All in all, the Congress passed without having created much opportunity for the international propaganda of the regime, but also without creating any embarrassment.[62]

Once the Congress was over and the guests had left the country, the attempts by Muşat and Ardeleanu to reach the top of the prestige pyramid in the field of history-writing continued. At the same time the problem for the regime of producing a synthesis of national history remained. The positions of Muşat and Ardeleanu allowed them to dominate their adversaries, using various malpractices in order to have their own writings printed and distributed. When this had been achieved it was relatively easy to have them acknowledged as "cornerstones", and oblige the historians to make proper reference to them.

The contrast between different networks of interest is visible, for example, in the partial check by the regime on the gradual rise of Iosip Constantin Drăgan, an Italian magnate of Romanian origins, from the late 1970s. Drăgan had founded his business empire in Italy, and from the early 1950s he dedicated himself to spreading, through his review *Bulletin Européen*, "European ideas". In 1967, his cultural efforts were channelled into the Drăgan European Foundation, which counted many different centres of research and publishing among its branches. The Nagard Publishing House, founded in Rome and Milan, published several books by Drăgan himself, a passionate amateur Dacianist. Trying to re-establish himself in Romania (he lived in exile for 30 years after the communist takeover in 1948), he wrote and published in both Romania and Italy the work *We, the Thracians, and Our Multi-Millenary History*.[63]

Drăgan had evidently obtained an official permit to publish the book in Romania, which meant that he had many contacts within the regime. But an archival document from 1978 makes clear that Muşat was not one of them. When Drăgan wanted to found a research centre for economics in Romania and an 'association for the promotion of research and study in archaeology,

history, linguistics, ethnography, dedicated to the research on the ancient Thracians',[64] Mușat considered that the creation of a research centre for economics was 'not justified', while the forming of a Thracology association did not 'constitute an interest for Romania'.[65] Mușat's position on these matters was probably not due to his own quest for power, but due to direct instructions from Ceaușescu.

In June 1980, Drăgan came to meet the Romanian leader. On that occasion, Ceaușescu found himself facing a determined politician, business-man, and Thracianist, who offered him a second 'corrected and expanded' edition of *We, the Thracians* which stressed that 'the Thracian space was much larger, namely in Italy, Spain, Libya, and by the means that they had at their disposal (large boats, etc.) the Thracians clearly reached America'.[66] Drăgan also pointed out the inadequacies of his interlocutor's regime when propagandizing national history: at the last Thracology congress, held in Vienna in 1980, he maintained, 'the Romanian historians were numerically underrepresented'. Drăgan also criticized Ceaușescu for allowing an 'internal invasion' of gypsies [țigani] – 'one out of five Romanian children is the son of a gypsy' – and for having lost control of the Hungarians in Transylvania. He went on to criticize the Romanian economy, proposed to found a new political Party in Romania (sic), and finally suggested opening a branch of the Drăgan European Foundation in Romania. Ceaușescu answered that if the Foundation limited itself to dealing with economic problems it was 'worth thinking about',[67] but implicitly refused to consider Drăgan's 'cultural' proposals.

Mușat and Ardeleanu were immediately informed of these develop-ments, and were able to turn them to their own advantage. When the synthesis project collapsed in 1980, and Ceaușescu tried to limit as much as possible Drăgan's influence in Romania, Mușat and Ardeleanu probably thought that it was a good idea to take advantage of the existing "void" and present a series of historical works that the leadership would appreciate – while in fact including many of Drăgan's ideas.[68]

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[64] ANIC, CC al PCR – Secția Propagandă și Agitație, 11/1978, ff. 12–14, *Propuneri*, f. 12.
[65] Ibid., f. 3.
[66] ANIC, CC al PCR – Secția Propagandă și Agitație, 24/1980, f. 1–3, *Probleme*, f. 1.
[67] Ibid., ff. 1–3.
[68] According to the judgement of Stan, 'being in the "waiting room" of Ceaușescu, they understood perfectly that what he expected from a synthesis of history was that it would appear to crown the entire social-political development of Romania, from Burebista on-wards'; in Stan, *Istorie și politica*, 297.

Between 1983 and 1989, Muşat and Ardeleanu became the authors of massive volumes on national history that counted as authorized "unofficial" versions of Romanian history: *De la statul geto-dac la statul român unitar* (*From the Geto-Dacian state to the Romanian unitary state*), published in 1983,[69] and the two volumes, in three parts, of *România după Marea Unire* (*Romania after the Great Union*).[70] Their main method when producing these gigantic volumes (in total more than 3 000 pages) was simple: plagiarism.

In his memoirs, former ISISP employee, CC propagandist, and dean of the Faculty of History at Bucharest University, Gh. I. Ioniţă, recollects that neither Muşat nor Ardeleanu had ever been seen in the archives or libraries, but that 'at a certain point, they rapidly published, [and] they signed with the qualification of editors the publishing of a series of documents [...], without having researched or discovered them in the archives or in other primary sources'.[71] Furthermore, they also published 'voluminous monographs of history, essays and articles, that had in their footnotes a vast amount of information, generally taken from other [authors'] volumes that had not yet been published, [that were waiting for their approval] [...] [but] that [Muşat and Ardeleanu] put aside indefinitely on the shelves of their offices'.[72]

Historian F. Constantiniu also recollects that the work of the duo was done primarily in the office of Muşat at the Propaganda Section, where Ardeleanu worked on a daily basis,[73] possibly to give the impression that their work was done as part of their propaganda office duties.[74] A. Stan considers that their works were primarily 'an archive-bazar of texts, [...] among which some were writings intercepted by the Securitate, belonging to several un-desirable authors' and 'a series of manuscripts that reached them through censorship, while others had been taken from public libraries where they had been deposited after having been presented as doctoral theses'.[75]

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[69] Mircea Muşat, Ion Ardeleanu, *De la statul geto-dac la statul român unitar* (Bucharest, Editura Ştiinţifică şi Enciclopedică, 1983).

[70] Idem, *România după Marea Unire,* vol. 2 (I) (Bucharest, Editura Ştiinţifică şi Enciclopedică, 1986); idem, *România după Marea Unire*, vol. 2 (II), (ibid., 1988); the continuity from *De la statul geto-dac*, is symbolized by the title "vol. 2", despite the fact that a "vol. 1" with the title *România după Marea Unire* was actually never published.

[71] Ioniţă, *O viaţă, un destin*, 129.

[72] Ibidem.

[73] Constantiniu, *De la Răutu şi Roller*, 378.

[74] Ibid., 379.

[75] Stan, *Istorie şi política*, 297.

A case of plagiarism by the duo is described by F. Constantiniu, who at that time heard protests from many ISISP and Iorga Institute researchers. A work by ISISP researchers on the Romanian interwar history, Viorica Moisuc, Constantin Botoran, Ion Calafeteanu together with Iorga Institute researcher Eliza Campus, Romania and the Peace Conference of Paris, was plagiarized extensively by Muşat and Ardeleanu in their 1983 volume *From the Geto-Dacian State*. Since the original text was sent to the Propaganda Section for review, Muşat and Ardeleanu took the opportunity to copy several pages for their own forthcoming volume, which appeared in 1983 for Editura Ştiinţifică şi Enciclopedică.

Viorica Moisuc protested against this blatant plagiarism and also against the subsequent refusal to publish the original ISISP-Iorga book. However, since at the end of the manuscript the authors had put the date "2 June 1982", they eventually obtained a publishing permit[76] – but for a smaller publishing house in Cluj,[77] with limited distribution, away from the large audience of Bucharest. F. Constantiniu has also found many sorts of evident plagiarism in the second part of the second volume, which appeared in 1988,[78] but he was also on the list of historians who were ordered by Muşat and Ardeleanu to review their books in several journals.[79]

Towards the end of the 1980s the offensive of Muşat and Ardeleanu became more intense, and they made ready for their final assault on their competitors. In 1987 they accused Ştefan Ştefanescu of being a Soviet agitator, using an attendance list from a seminar as 'a list [of persons] adhering to [the idea that] the annexation of Bessarabia in 1812 [was righteous]'. According to the accusation, Ştefanescu would have liked to hand over this territory to Gorbachev who was visiting Bucharest.[80] This attack certainly damaged Ştefanescu's professional and Party career, but did not lead to his removal. In 1988, a steering committee of the Iorga Institute criticized the demolishing of villages in the countryside, and this gave Muşat and Ardeleanu a new opportunity to attack Ştefanescu. This time the consequences went far beyond their intentions: Elena Ceauşescu, becoming informed of the situation, ordered at first the closing of the Institute, and

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[76] Constantiniu, *De la Răutu,* 399–400.
[77] Constantin Botoran, Ion Calafeteanu, Eliza Campus, Viorica Moisuc, *România şi Conferinţă de Pace de la Paris (1918–1920). Triumful principiului naţionalitatilor* (Cluj-Napoca, Editura Dacia, 1983).
[78] Constantiniu, *De la Răutu,* 400–401.
[79] Ibid., 402.
[80] Ibid., 425.

then the purge of 20 'subversive' researchers. However, these consequences were averted due to the intervention of an army general (gen. Vlad) in support of Ştefanescu.[81]

In March 1989, Muşat and Ardelean had virtually taken full control of Romanian history-writing, with the exception of military history. They had set up a commission empowered to approve or reject works on history, both monographs and articles in periodicals. The criteria for publishing were that the texts in question should contain the ideas of Ceauşescu 'in quotes', and make references 'to the works of Ceauşescu'.[82] Members of this commission were historians from the Iorga Institute, from the Centre for Military History, from the Ştefan Gheorghiu Party Academy, and from ISISP.[83] This network-made organization lead by Muşat and Ardeleanu had almost complete power over the entire field of history-writing – but not for long. The collapse of the regime put an end to it shortly afterwards.

Apart from the Muşat-Ardeleanu network, the other regime-supported network for history-writing was from the early 1980s in the hands of General Ilie Ceauşescu. Making use of family ties with his brother, he obtained high-level positions at the Defence ministry (1975–79) and became a member of the CC (from 1980 to 1989). A passionate historian of the Romanian nation and military, he held a very special position within Romanian history-writing. From his position as researcher at the Centre for Military History and Theory from the 1970s,[84] he wielded a decisive influence over the work of the entire institution. In 1981, he managed to have the director Eugen Bantea discharged and replaced by Gheorghe Tudor. He

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[81] Interview with Şerban Papacostea; Constantiniu, *De la Răutu*, 429–430. The same kind of attack was launched by Muşat and Ardeleanu against Gheorghe I. Ioniţă in 1987. See ibid., 426–427; see also Ioan Scurtu, cit. In the series of attacks made by the duo, a notable one was against Ion Popescu-Puţuri and Titu Georgescu in 1972: in that case, the duo showed the leadership that the directives concerning the biographies of communist activists in the past were not followed. Ioniţă considers that their intention was to get rid of the ISISP direction, but the result was merely that the second volume of the book in question, [I. Popescu-Puţuri, T. Geogrescu (eds.), *Purtători de flamuri revoluţionare* (Bucharest: Editura Editura Ştiinţifică şi Enciclopedică, 1971] was never published. See Ioniţă, *O viaţă,* 134–135.

[82] Stan, *Revoluţia română*, 123–124.

[83] Ibidem. From the Iorga Institute: Apostol Stan, Mircea Iosa, Nichita Adaniloaie, Alexandru Porţeanu, Georgeta Penelea; from the Centre for Military History: Constantin Căzănisteanu, Nicolae Petreanu, Constantin Olteanu; from the Ştefan Gheorghiu Party Academy: Stelian Popescu and Ion Iacoş; from ISISP: Virgil Smârcea, Ion Bulei, Marin Badea, Viorica Moisuc, Constantin Botoran.

[84] Ştefanescu, *Enciclopedia*, entry "Ceauşescu, Ilie".

also assigned the Department of military history to lieutenant and graduate historian Mihail E. Ionescu. With a renewed steering board, the Centre started to attract historians who were willing to write on military history – and to pass on their work to Ilie Ceauşescu.

Already from the 1970s, the Centre had been publishing a collection of *Documents on the military history of the Romanian people,*[85] and a massive collection of documents named "Files of military history of the Romanian people".[86] This intense publishing activity continued until 1989. After the failed synthesis project in 1980, Ceauşescu personally handed to his brother Ilie the task of overseeing the production of a new version of Romanian history based on the previous manuscript – a work that was published in 1984.[87]

According to rumours about that era, Ilie and Elena Ceauşescu were in conflict over the eventual successor to Nicolae. Elena was convinced that Ilie aspired to take over the leadership and that his focus on history was part of an attempt to form his own power network, which was separate from the Party but at the same time highly attractive in terms of career opportunities. The political status of Ilie Ceauşescu increased during the 1980s, to the point that in 1988 he became quasi-equal to his brother in terms of influence, both domestically and abroad. Possible evidence of the truth of this rumour is that Ilie Ceauşescu and his entourage were systematically

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[85] Petre Ilie, Al. Gh. Savu, Leonida Loghin, Mihail Ionescu (eds.), *Documente privind istoria militară a poporului român* (Bucharest: Editura Militară: vol. I, 1977; vol. II, 1977; vol. III, 1978; vol. IV, 1979; vol. V, 1980; vol. VI, 1980; vol. VII, 1984; vol. VIII, 1984; vol. IX, 1985; vol. X, 1988).

[86] Ilie Ceauşescu (ed.), *File din istoria militară a poporului român* (Bucharest: Editura Militară: vol. 1, 1973; vol. 2, 1974; vol. 3, 1975; vol. 4, 1977; vol. 5–6, 1979; vol. 7, 1980; vol. 8, 1980; vol. 9, 1981; vol. 10, 1982; vol. 11, 1983; vol. 12, 1984; vol. 13, 1984; vol. 14, 1984; vol. 15, 1984; vol. 16, 1985; vol. 17, 1987, vol. 18, 1988; vol. 19, 1988).

[87] Ilie Ceauşescu, Constantin Olteanu, Ştefan Pascu, Constantin Olteanu, Vasile Milea, Ştefan Ştefanescu, Constantin Antip, Mircea Muşat, Gheorghe Tudor, Alexandru Gheorghe Savu, Florian Tucă (eds.), *Istoria Militară a poporului român*, vol. I (*Din cele mai vechi timpuri pîna în secolul al XIV-lea*) (Bucharest: Editura Militară, 1984); idem, vol. II (*Epoca de clorie a oastei celei mari. A doua jumătate a secolului al XIV-lea – primas jumătate a secolului al XVI-lea*) (Bucharest: Editura Militară, 1986); idem, vol. 3 (*Epopea luptei naţionale pentru unitate, libertate şi integritate teritorială: din epoca Mihai Viteazul pănă în jurul revoluţiei populare conduse de Horia, 1550–1784*) (Bucharest: Editura Militară, 1987); idem, vol. 4 (Epoca revoluţiilor de eliberare naţională şi socială de la revoluţia populară din 1784 la cucerirea independenţei depline, 1877–1878) (Bucharest: Editura Militară, 1987); idem, vol. 5 (*Evoluţia organismului militar românesc de la cucerirea independenţei de stat pînă la înfăptuirea Marii Uniri din 1918; România în anii primului război mondial*) (Bucharest: Editura Militară, 1988).

followed and checked by the Securitate, and so were their foreign guests (both diplomats and researchers). Additional evidence is the attempts by Elena Ceaușescu, nominated first deputy prime minister, to stop the publications edited by Ilie. Constantiniu notes: 'to stop him from acquiring notoriety, Elena Ceaușescu sabotaged the efforts of her brother-in-law with all means possible. When the printing plans came up for approval, she mercilessly imposed cuts'.[88] According to Constantiniu, the resistance of Elena Ceaușescu could not be bypassed, only handled by diplomatic means. This may explain why Ilie Ceaușescu was always prepared to collaborate with Mușat and Ardeleanu, letting them edit works in military history. Mușat evidently had some influence over Elena Ceaușescu, since none of these works on the military history were definitely stopped.[89]

Ilie supported the historical views of the brother but at the same time had some leeway in forming his own personal definition of a "military" historical canon, which was even more extreme than the official canon: protochronism and Dacianism *were* emphasised beyond reasonable evidence, making this kind of historiography more similar to the one proposed by Drăgan than the official Party version.

In order to edit the several volumes of the monographs on the *Military History of the Romanian People*, Ilie Ceaușescu sought for collaborators among historians working outside the Centre: academicians, ISISP historians, university professors, and propagandists. As shown in the previous chapter, Ion Bulei refused to work for him, since rumour had it that he demanded an incredible amount of work, much more than Mușat and Ardeleanu. Ilie Ceaușescu was clearly not easy to handle in work-related discussions. Editor Alexandru Gheorghe Savu had a conflict with Ilie Ceaușescu when trying to make him reconsider the exaggerations about the Dacians in the first volume of *Military History*, referring to the leader's theses on the Dacians and Romans as the joint ancestors of the Romanian people. As a result, Ilie Ceaușescu removed him as editor.[90]

The works on military history were controversial, not only for their content, but also for their very selective editing. The historians at the Institute of Archaeology protested after the publication of the first volume,

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[88] Constantiniu, 410.
[89] Elena Ceaușescu is said to have stopped the Romanian-Hungarian historiographical conflict on the history of Transylvania beginning in 1986 after two consecutive counter-offensives by the Romanians; ibid., 417.
[90] Ibid., 407–408.

since their contributions had been thoroughly re-edited, according to Papacostea 'in the thracomanic sense without the approval of the authors. It was a scandal'.[91] After what had happened with the first volume, finding that the Centre had not taken the external historians seriously, Papacostea wrote a letter in which he refused to take any part in the second volume, where a contribution by him was expected on the subject of international politics at the time of Stefan the Great.[92]

As we have seen, the history-writing milieu perfectly represented the 'closed horizon' of the 1980s: from 1974, the canon started to be promoted by the regime with increasing insistence in the main historiographical projects. Central actors within the propaganda apparatus (Muşat and Ardeleanu), one emigrated business tycoon (Drăgan), and one army general (Ilie Ceauşescu) were *for* different reasons interested in assuming important positions within Romanian history-writing. Muşat and Ardeleanu actively promoted the regime's canon as expressed in the speeches of the leader, Nicolae Ceauşescu, in order to secure their own positions and possibly climb even higher. Ilie Ceauşescu was interested in enhancing the propaganda concerning the Romanian army in view of a possible future struggle for succession. For this reason, he received resources from his brother for building up his own propaganda institution. Finally, Drăgan was interested in affirming his cultural authority in Romania and in promoting nationalist values, and he succeeded in influencing Ilie Ceauşescu's and many ISISP historians.

Exploiting the struggle among these networks for power, Ceauşescu had no problem having his ideas magnified and praised in an increasingly bombastic manner during the last decade of the regime. The result of this struggle was a canon in which the protochronist and Dacianist tendencies became much more accentuated, and the reference to the leader's words a

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[91] Interview with Şerban Papacostea by the author, 7th February 2013.

[92] Ibidem. Hungarian historian Ludovic Demény also withdrew his contribution, without any reaction from the regime. Source: F. Constantiniu, *De la Răutu*, 411. A witness told me (off the record) that Şerban Papacostea suffered no consequences for his refusal. This was because in the Party milieu the rumour started to circulate that he was Elena Ceauşescu's choice as the future history mentor for her son Nicu Ceauşescu, whose succession to his father she wanted to secure. Consequently, within the Party propaganda apparatus speculations started about a possible connection between Papacostea and the leadership – a connection which actually did not exist. This rumour does make sense in the context of the conflict between Ilie vs. Elena: a letter of refusal by a participant in Ilie's anthology could have been used by Elena as proof that Ilie was abusing his authority, and consequently would have allowed her to block his works.

constant that became increasingly repetitive, annoying, and finally hated by
the general national public.

8.3 ISISP in the 'closed horizon'

What was the actual position of ISISP in the closed horizon of Romanian
historiography depicted previously? How did this affect the main trends
and features of ISISP's historical production during Ceauşescu's regime,
and how did ISISP respond to attempts to overstep the limits of the official
canon by its historians? In order to answer these questions, the sources
from the ISISP archive and secondary literature are contextualized in the
landscape depicted in the previous sub-chapter, while the ISISP historio-
graphy from the period 1966–89 is presented in order to consider the most
important examples of this history-writing, and how it evolved from
national-communism to sultanism. Three examples will be provided
showing how ISISP dealt with historiographical topics which, theoretically,
were permitted by the canon, but which actually were too sensitive to be
handled in a merely scholarly manner.

8.3.1 The "small institute"

One of the consequences of the sedimentation of bureaucratic organizations
is the drastic decrease and visibility of internal conflicts. In the case of ISISP,
not much information is available on its history-writing milieu in the late
1970s and early 80s,[93] hardly enough to build a coherent narrative. The few
available elements of "ISISP's internal life" consist of memoirs and inter-
views. These elements, sparse information on everyday working life, on the
Dacianist tendencies of some of the ISISP establishment, and only two cases
of conflict, do not constitute a sufficient basis for depicting the ISISP
networks and groups in the 1980s. From the sources available, it seems that
the game for power and positions was already concluded at the beginning of
the 1970s. The process of professionalization of the cadres was completed
around 1970, since ISISP was in 1968 given the power to confer doctoral

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[93] For the last decade of the regime, one single folder is available from the ISISP archive:
ANIC, ISISP, 1/1980. It contains the minutes of the steering committees of the Institute
in the years 1980–1985 and internal reviews of ISISP historians – which are all positive,
in favour of their publications.

degrees in history. The veterans and the propagandists were saved, in order to retain their loyalty to the regime. There is no evidence of any serious quest for power after the aforementioned attempt by Muşat and Ardeleanu to attack Popescu-Puţuri and T. Georgescu in 1972.[94]

The Institute participated in the regime's projects. Its historians had an important role in the propaganda commissions, but they also made individual contributions, in the form of essays and monographs, that increased the chances of the various networks of Party history-writing to succeed when competing for the appreciation of the leader. But still, ISISP appears on the whole to have been one of the minor players. It was probably affected by Muşat's and Ardeleanu's attack on Popescu-Puţuri, but this led to only very minor consequences. Muşat and Ardeleanu had very limited power over ISISP's reorganization in 1976, when it was officially restructured as a 'small institute'.[95] Nevertheless, the number of personnel (113 employees, of which 66 were researchers) was not reduced. Instead, the managerial positions were cut from 14 to eight, and the six existing sections were turned into three sectors (International Workers' and Democratic Movement, Communist Times, and Period 1921–1944).[96] At the same time, the Museum for the History of the Communist Party, which was an integral part of ISISP and had no independent budget, had yet another 119 employees and was reorganized into five new sections (History of the Workers' Movement, History of the RCP, Contemporary History, Mass Organizations, and the Doftana Museum).[97]

Towards the end of the regime, in 1985, a major attack was prepared by the leadership on institutions for history-writing. Ceauşescu, disappointed that ISISP had still not managed to publish a Party history synthesis,[98] had it included in the list of the institutes for historical research to be abolished. The plan was to select part of its personnel for a new comprehensive institute, the Central Institute of National History.[99] Previous research and archival sources do not tell us what reasons induced the State Council to eventually stop the project. But, for our purposes, it is noteworthy that the

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[94] Ioniţă, *O viaţă, un destin*, 134.
[95] ANIC, CC al PCR, Cancelarie, 11/1976, ff. 10–14: *Nota cu privire la reorganizarea Institutului de studii istorice şi social-politice de pe lîngă CC al PCR*, f. 2.
[96] Ibid., f. 12.
[97] ANIC, CC al PCR, ff. 22–24: *Nota*, f. 22–23.
[98] Deletant, 'Rewriting the past', 79–80.
[99] Felician Velimirovici, *Istorie şi istorici în România comunistă, 1948–1989* (Oradea: Editura MEGA, 2015), 239–248.

plan prescribed the re-employment of less than a quarter of the ISISP staff[100] compared to the retaining of half of the personnel at the other targeted institutes.[101]

The plan to dissolve ISISP is rather puzzling since the decree stated that the decision has been taken because 'the dispersion of the forces and the insufficient coordination of the research activities favoured the appearance of some works and studies that are contrary to historical truth and that offer the possibility of tendentious interpretations, of deformation and denaturation of our national history by some foreign historians'.[102] While many rumours surround this episode, very few can be substantiated.[103] What can be said is that the existence of ISISP was endangered towards the end of the regime, but the reasons for this, and why nothing actually happened, remain obscure.

8.3.2 The national-communist historiography of ISISP, 1968–1989

What historiography was actually produced by the new meta-narrative canon, and how was it developed into a pure apology for national-communism in the 'closed horizon'? The main trends and tendencies developed by the ISISP historians were examples of the application of the political canon. 1968 and 1974 were the crucial dates when the historiographical canon became not only a good indication but a compulsory guideline for interpreting and presenting national and Party history. Nevertheless, the narratives of ISISP seemed to continue without major changes throughout the Ceauşescu regime: the main point remained the symbiosis between

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[100] Ibid., 147.

[101] ANIC, CC al PCR – Propagandă şi Agitaţie, 8/1985, *Raport privind înfiinţarea, organizarea şi funcţionarea Institutului Central de Istorie Naţională* [*Report on the creation, organization, and functioning of the Central Institute of National History*], ff. 17–23, f. 23. The institutes that would have been absorbed by new Institute were ISISP, the Iorga Institute, the Institute for South-East European Studies, the Institute of Archaeology, the Institute of History and Archaeology in Cluj-Napoca, and the Institute of History and Archaeology A.D. Xenopol in Iaşi. Source: ANIC, CC al PCR, Secţia Propaganda şi Agitaţie, 8/1985, *Unitaţile de cercetare din componenţa Institutului Central de Istorie Naţionala*, f. 22.

[102] ANIC, CC al PCR – Propagandă şi Agitaţie, 8/1985, *Raport*, f. 18.

[103] Dennis Deletant reports that at that time the rumour was that the Soviet ambassador in Bucharest successfully pleaded for ISISP with Ceauşescu. Deletant, 'Rewriting the past', 79–80.

"national" and "social", making the nation the defender of socialism, and socialism the ultimate form of good for the nation.

In several works published from 1970 onwards, the nineteenth and twentieth century socialists and founding figures of Marxism-Leninism (Marx, Engels, and Lenin) were depicted as passionate supporters of the national idea. This trend began with the publication of Marx's *Însemnări despre români,* and continued in 1970 with a collection of articles by Engels in the Romanian press.[104]

Lenin's ties with Romania were presented the same year in a work edited by Augustin Deac and Ion Ilinciou. In this narrative Lenin appears to sympathize with the Romanian national struggle for independence, and his ties with the socialist thinkers and activists are demonstrated.[105] Lucrețiu Pătrășcanu, former minister of justice and an interwar communist with scholarly education, but purged in Stalinist times, was rehabilitated posthumously. His works were republished under the supervision of ISISP: his *Sub Trei Dictaturi* was reissued in 1970, but actually failed to have much influence on the historiography concerning Romanian fascism. Pătrășcanu's point was that Romanian fascism originated from a combination of internal and international political and economic factors, and was not a simple "import" from fascist Italy and the Third Reich as the ISISP historiography incessantly repeated.[106]

Another visible trend is the "nationalization" of Romanian socialism: the workers' and socialist movement was presented as a supporter of independence and national unity and the goal of implementing socialism was combined with national aims. Basically, the workers' movement was read as a historical form of the national struggle. Ion Iacoș, an ISISP researcher, published in 1973 a work on the Workers' Socialist Party in which he presented the problematic conditions of workers in pre-unitary Romanian as directly linked to the lack of national independence.[107] According to *The Romanian Revolution of 1848* (1969), the proletariat always had the national interest at its heart, in the same way as the 1848ers, the medieval princes,

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[104] ISISP (ed.), *Friedrich Engels în publicistica româna* (Editura Politică: Bucharest, 1970). As Miron Constantinescu explained in the volume, the forefathers of socialism 'never pretended that […] by an explanation or a solution found in a certain circumstance one could obtain a universal variable for all times and situations'.
[105] Augustin Deac, Ion Ilinciou, *Lenin și România* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1970).
[106] Lucrețiu Pătrășcanu, *Sub Trei Dictaturi* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1970).
[107] Ion Iacoș, *Partidul muncitorilor din Români în viața social-poliică a țării, 1893–1910* (Bucharest: Eidtura Politică, 1973.

and the ancient Dacians. The RCP was consequently 'the continuator of their struggle for independence'.[108]

Apart from the workers' movement and Party history, the nation became the main topic for this kind of historiography. A qualitative leap was made with an explicit nationalism that re-evaluated the politics of the liberal governments from the beginning of the century, denied the existence of a proper Romanian fascism, and minimized the crimes of the Antonescu dictatorship. In 1969, Viorica Moisuc wrote about the interwar period: 'the foreign politics of Romania were aimed [...] at ensuring peace and territorial integrity'.[109] According to Moisuc, the national union of 1918 'joined together the strength, the worries, the struggle of the Romanians, wherever they were, until the final victory'.[110] On the Romanian participation in the First World War, historian Augustin Deac supported the decision of the Romanian liberal governments. The Romanian neutrality until 1916 was justified by making references to Lenin and his geopolitical analysis, and also to the position of the socialists; but once Romania had entered the war, Deac accepted the government explanation from that time: war was necessary and righteous, even if unwanted. 'It's now or never', wrote Deac, 'Romania wanted national unity but not through war. But this did not depend on it',[111] meaning that Romania did not enter the First World War in order to gain unification and complete independence, but that this was the final outcome.

The ISISP historiography standardised the Party canon, and stressed the role of the Party as the continuator of the millenary struggle of the Romanian people.[112] The polemics against Soviet influence in Romania found ample space in the monographs dedicated to the history of the Party during the interwar period. The Soviets were portrayed as infiltrators of the Party

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[108] Căzănişteanu, *Revoluţia română din 1848*. 374. On the same topic, see also Titu Georgescu, *Traditions progressistes, révolutionnaires du peuple roumain (1848–1971)* (Bucharest: Meridiane, 1971), which reproduced for an international public the interwar discourse on the creative force of national specificity.

[109] Viorica Moisuc, *Studii privind politica externă a României, 1919–1939* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1969), 6.

[110] Idem, *Probleme de politică externă a României, 1918–1940* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1977).

[111] Augustin Deac, *Caracterul participării României la primul război mondial* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1973), 39.

[112] The first echoes of this tendency were visible already in the wake of the July theses, with I. Popescu-Puţuri, A. Deac, *Crearea Partidului Comunist Român (Mai 1921)* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1971).

who considered Romania as an imperialist creation, and did not defend the national interests, but rather 'accepted into the mass organization […] only those who wanted to fight for communism'.[113] At the same time, other monographs stressed the glorious history and heroism of the veterans (without mentioning their names), as in the case of the aforementioned *Bringers of the Revolutionary Flames* and in *Doftana. Symbol of Revolutionary Heroism*,[114] or of the mass organizations created by the Party in clandestinity.[115]

The *coup d'etat* staged in 1944, whose actual meaning changed several times during the communist regime,[116] was considered to be the occasion when a revolutionary act organized solely by the Party overthrew the dictatorship and initiated a new era of *justice* and peace in Romania. The contribution to the *coup* of the interwar antifascist parties was forgotten, as well as the fundamental role of the Red army in liberating the country. In order to compensate for the limited influence of the Party during the interwar and war periods, many contributions focused on the struggles of the Romanian communists against fascism. Resistance was seen as an international movement[117] of allies that constituted a national liberation struggle for each of the peoples subjugated by the fascist powers. The actual form of this struggle was different in each country: in Romania it was represented solely by the communists, who succeeded in bringing to Romania social and national justice.[118] In the same vein, in two volumes on the 1945–46 history

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[113] I. Popescu-Puţuri, A. Deac, Florea Dragne, Olimpiu Matichescu, *Organizaţii de masă legale şi ilegale create, conduse sau influenţate de P.C.R. 1921–1944*, vol. I (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1970), xv. The second volume was published in 1981.

[114] *Doftana. Simbol al eroismului revoluţionar* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1979). Manuela Marin has stressed that Ceauşescu is the only name mentioned among an amorphous mass of communist militants. See Marin, Manuela. 'The young revolutionary's myth: The Nicolae Ceauşescu's Case', *Studia Universitatis Babes-Bolyai – Historia* (1-2/2007): 38–74.

[115] Popescu-Puţuri, Ion (ed.), *Tineretul comunist în acţiune: Contribuţii la istoria Uniunii tineretului Comunist din România* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1972).

[116] On this, see Ştefan Ş. Borbély, 'Politics as a memory distortion: a case study on 23 August 1944', *Chaietele Echinox* 1 (2001), 123–133.

[117] Gheorghe Adorian, Mihai Burcă, Constantin Câmpeanu, Mihail Florescu, Stefan Minea, Ion Nedelcu, Valter Roman (eds.), *Voluntari români în Spania, 1936–1939. Amintiri şi documente* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1971); Gheorghe Vasilichi, Mihail Florescu, Vasile Ionescu, Gheorghe Adorian, Alexandru Jar, Constantin Câmpeanu (eds.), *Români în resistenţa franceză în anii celui de-al doilea război mondial (amintiri)* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1969).

[118] Eugen Bantea, Constantin Nicolae, Gheorghe Zaharia, *La Roumanie dans la guerre antihitlérienne, août 1944-mai 1945* (Bucharest: Éditions Meridiane, 1970); Pavel

of popular democracy, the Party is presented as saving Romania from the antifascist parties, which were accused of planning a civil war and an invasion by the West. At the same time, the violence that communist organizations perpetrated against their political enemies was not mentioned.[119]

Complementary to this hagiographical history was the current that historian Adrian Cioflâncă has defined as 'exculpatory'.[120] This historiography, which is presented more fully below, minimized the role of the legionaries and the Antonescu regime in the deportation and mass killings of Jews, Roma, and religious minorities. The suffering of these victims was whitewashed in order to assimilate, in the narrative, the Jews with the Romanians. Apart from this, the current maintained that a Romanian fascism never really existed, and that *the* Legionary Movement and the Iron Guard were basically a fifth-column of Nazism.

National in form and Stalinist in its content, this historiography was produced with a copious use of resources in order to spread the meanings that were supposed to fill all forms of propaganda. For this reason, many ISISP historians were used as consultants in film-making,[121] and also to

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Popescu, *Reportaj de front. Din contribuția României la rzboiul antihitlerist* (Bucharest: Editions Meridiane, 1970); ASSP, ISISP, *Împotriva fascismului. Sesiunea științifică privind analizza critică și demascarea fascismului în România* (Bucharest, Editura Politică, 1971); Valter Roman, Gheorghe Zaharia (eds.), *Marea Conflagrație a secolului XX al doilea război mondial* (Bucarest: Editura Politică, 1971) [vol. 2, 1974]; Nicolae Copoiu, Gheorghe Zaharia, Gheorghe Unc (eds.), *Rezistența europeană în anii celui de-al doilea război mondial, 1938–1945*, Vol. 1 (Bucharest: Editura Militară, 1973), [Vol. 2, (Bucharest: Editura Militară, 1976)].

[119] Nichita Paraschiva, *6 martie 1945* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1975). Mihai Fătu, *Un vot decisiv. Noiembrie '46* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1972).

[120] Adrian Cioflâncă, *A grammar of exculpation in communist historiography: distortion of the history of the Holocaust under Ceausescu*, cit. Other authors that reached the same conclusions were: Radu Ioanid, *The Sword of the Archangel. Fascist Ideology in Romania* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), 1–24; Armin Heinen, *Legiunea Arhangelul Mihail, mișcare socială și organizație politică. O contribuție la problema fascismului international* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2006) [first print: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, München, 1986]; Lucian Boia, *A Historiografical Controversy: the Jews of Romania During the Second World War*, in Istorie și ideologie, ed. M. Dobre, (Bucharest: University of Bucharest, 2003), available on http://ebooks.unibuc.ro/istorie/ideologie/index.htm at the address http://ebooks.unibuc.ro/istorie/ideologie/20.htm.

[121] While these historical films were produced with the help of the Academy historians, the ISISP historians were employed as historical supervisors and consultants for films on the twentieth century. One example is *Pădurea de fagi* (*Beech Forest*, 1987, by Cristina Nichitus), with Ion Ardeleanu and Olimpiu Matichescu as history advisors. See A. Vasile, *Le cinéma roumain dans le période communiste*, 400–438.

review non-scholarly publications for the masses.[122] Furthermore, they travelled abroad in connection with foreign institutions, and gave international recognition to ISISP history-writing. ISISP published not only for the domestic market, but also for the international one: many of these books can be found in the public libraries of many countries worldwide.

8.3.3 ISISP and the containment of political problems

The writings of ISISP between 1968 and 1989 followed the fixed canon, becoming with time more and more monolithic in their assumptions. On some occasions, ISISP had to control the national ideology that the approved canon allowed the historians to write – either preventing the historians from writing on certain topics, or sanctioning their actions *a posteriori*. Whenever a historiographical product became politically relevant and this problem was reported to the direction, the latter intervened, repressing the individual historian. Three examples demonstrate this trend.

The *first* example concerns the political history of the Antonescu regime. In 1979, Aurică Simion published the first monograph on it, offering a relatively positive picture: *Preliminarii politico-diplomatice ale insurecției române din August 1944* (*The Political-Diplomatic Preliminary of the Romanian Insurgency of Autumn 1944*).[123] Among the illustrations, for the first time a portrait of Ion Antonescu appeared, and this attracted the attention of the ISISP leadership.[124] Mihai Fătu, an ISISP historian working on the same historical topics, led a coalition of 'veterans, pro-Soviets, and frustrated colleagues at the Party History Institute'[125] against Simion. Due to these protests, the book was withdrawn from circulation.[126]

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[122] Many reviews of external products are present in ANIC, ISISP, A-13/2; Ibid., A-13/14.
[123] Aurică Simion, *Preliminarii politico-diplomatice ale insurecției române din August 1944* (Cluj-Napoca, Editura Dacia, 1979).
[124] Interview with Florian Tănăsescu via e-mail, 26th May 2014.
[125] Constantiniu, *De la Răutu,* 395. Fătu later on was able to publish a fully approved propaganda volume for Editura Politică on the topic: Mihai Fătu, Ion Spălățelu, *Garda de Fier. Organizație teroristă de tip fascist* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1980). See also Viorica Moisuc, *Frânturi din viața unui bun prieten și coleg – așa cum am conoscut-o*, in *România în relațiile internaționale. Diplomație, minorități, istorie. In honorem Ion Calafeteanu*, ed. Silviu Miloiu (Târgoviște: Cetatea de Scaun, 2010), 23–41.
[126] Alina Tudor Păvelescu, *Le Conducător, le Parti et le Peuple. Le discours nationaliste comme discours de légitimation dans la Roumanie de Ceaușescu (1965–1989),* doctoral dissertation (Paris: Institut d'Etudes Politiques, 2009), 237–239 and notes.

But when the book appeared, Simion's colleague and office-sharer at ISISP, Ion Bulei, wrote a very positive review of it in the student magazine *Viață Studentească* (*Student Life*). When the review appeared, Ion Bulei was summoned by Popescu-Puțuri, who told him that he would have to answer for his conduct to the Party section at the Institute. At that meeting, vice-director Gheorghe Zaharia read the review aloud and warned the members present to avoid the example offered by Bulei. This warning concerned both the content of the review but also the fact that it had been published without any previous consultation with the Institute leadership. At the end of the meeting, Bulei was forbidden to publish for three months.[127] In this case, ISISP acted in defence of the canon, after receiving advice from a network which evidently did not sympathize with Simion or Bulei.

In another case, an ISISP researcher was made a "sacrificial victim" and had to pay for a whole publication initiative. At the beginning of the 1980s, the *Anale de Istorie* dedicated a series of articles, edited by Mircea Mușat and Florin Tănăsescu, to the Romanian—Hungarian relationship and the condition of the ethnic minorities during the interwar period. In the final *article*,[128] Tănăsescu and Mușat wrote 'after 1 December 1918, Hungary began actions aimed at compromising Romania at the international level'.[129] Therefore, the authors concluded, the Romanian military occupation of Hungary in 1919 re-established the rights and freedom annihilated by the Bolshevik revolution. The ambassador of Hungary officially protested against the 'anti-socialist attitude' of the article, condemning the series by Mușat and Tănăsescu as an attack on communist principles and values. The leadership accepted these complaints and consequently had to find a scape-goat for the mistake. Not Mușat, who was powerful, useful, and well-pro-tected. A minor sacrifice was sufficient: Tănăsescu, who was removed from ISISP in 1983.[130]

One subject most notably absent in ISISP historiography is the question of Bessarabia. In 1967, Popescu-Puțuri dodged the question of whether ISISP had any interest in having a "Bessarabian section".[131] During the fol-

[127] Interview with Ion Bulei, 12th February 2013.
[128] Mircea Mușat, Florian Tănăsescu, 'Naționalitățile conlocuitoare în statul roman întregit în 1918', *Anale de Istorie* (5/1982), 49–64.
[129] Ibid., 64.
[130] Interview with Florian Tănăsescu, via e-mail, 26th May 2014.
[131] ANIC, Popescu-Puțuri Family Archive, 62, f. 116–124: *Audiența d-lui Pan Halipa […] la tovarașului Ion Popescu-Puțuri*, ff. 122. Pantlimon Halipa, a Bessarabian irredentist,

lowing years, this topic was monopolized by Muşat and Ardeleanu. They instructed their ghost-writers Bulei, Botoran, Călăfeteanu, and Simion: 'you must not publish on Bessarabia, because that would create a problem. But we [the Romanians] want that they [the Soviets] should know exactly what we believe in, what we are sure to be the truth',[132] and subsequently they published works on Bessarabia written by others under their own names.[133]

Bulei is still convinced that he performed a good service, in this sense, giving the duo his texts to publish on the topic: 'we [historians] did it because there was something patriotic in us, we always did it with pleasure even if our names were not recorded, we have left our mark in the good knowledge of Romanian history, of the truth in Romanian history'.[134] In this he is not alone. After 1989, the majority of the memorialists expressed this sense of patriotic duty when referring to their work of history-writing under communism.[135]

8.4 Conclusions

The period between the 11th Congress of the Communist Party in 1974 and the fall of the regime were also the years when historiography was trans-

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was received by Popescu-Puţuri. He asked if ISISP had a "Bessarabian section", but Popescu-Puţuri stated that Transylvania was 'in the spotlight at the moment'.

[132] As paraphrased by Bulei, who explained to me: 'you could not publish on Bessarabia because it belonged to the Soviet Union, and on this matter you could not speak freely, you could merely say *what was allowed to be said*'. Interview with Ion Bulei, 12th February 2013.

[133] See, i.e., M. Muşat, I. Ardeleanu, *Political life in Romania, 1918–1921* (Bucharest: Editura Academiei RSR, 1982); idem, *De la statul geto-dac la statul român unitar* (Bucharest: Editura Ştiinţifică şi Enciclopedică, 1983); idem, *From Ancient Dacia to Modern Romania* (Bucharest: Editura Ştiinţifică şi Enciclopedică, 1985); idem, *România după Marea Unire*, vol. II (Bucharest: Editura Ştiinţifică şi Enciclopedică, 1985 (part 1) and 1988 (part 2).

[134] Interview with Ion Bulei, February 23rd, 2013.

[135] Constantiniu, 403: 'Today, when the concepts of nation and patriotic feeling are contested, discredited, ridiculed, it is difficult to understand […] publications of this kind'; A. Stan, *Istorie şi politică*, 298–299; Ioniţă, *O viaţă, un destin*, 191. V. Moisuc, Constantin Botoran, Viorica Moisuc, *Frânturi din viaţa unui bun prieten şi coleg – aşa cum am conoscut-o*, in Silviu Miloiu (ed.), *România în relaţiile internaţionale. Diplomaţie, minorităţi, istorie. In honorem Ion Calafeteanu* (Târgovişte: Cetatea de Scaun, 2010), 23–41.

formed into a weapon of propaganda.[136] The regime made efforts to present the leadership, the Party, the army, and the nation as united for the good of Romania. The duty of history was to stress the unity, continuity, independence and antiquity of the Romanian nation, and to highlight the Party as the main defender of these principles.[137] History was turned into a means for propagandizing the national-communist ideology, and the consequences for the history discipline were evident at every level in the gigantic projects endorsed and financed by the regime.

In this empirical chapter, dedicated to positioning ISISP in the field of history-writing, it has been shown that in this period several major active players, among them Ilie Ceauşescu and Iosip Constantin Drăgan, for different reasons, were leading mixed networks of Party, military, and Academy historians. These networks propagandized protochronist, Dacianist, and nationalist ideas with different arguments and topics, in order to obtain appreciation and resources from the leader and his family. Ilie Ceauşescu evidently had the trust of his brother, but Elena Ceauşescu tried to obstruct him in his attempts to acquire legitimacy and popularity within the country, a goal he shared with emigre business tycoon Drăgan.

The clashes that ensued are still partially unknown due to the lack of documentary evidence and the reticence about providing testimonies of those involved. It is therefore difficult to provide a clear picture of the characters involved in this drama (ending in 1989 with thousands of casualties and the execution of Nicolae and Elena Ceauşescu), and to frame how these conflicts were generated and managed the history-writing milieu in particular. Still, what seems clear is that higher Party officials, army generals and foreign businessmen had discovered the benefits of proposing themselves as key figures in the history-writing milieu.

These powerful actors could count on the services of several higher propagandists who had at their disposal resources and means to buttress their authority by way of scholarship. Muşat *and* Ardeleanu were among the foremost of these, being patrons of a vast array of scholars. They could use the resources of several institutions provided through their political

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[136] Papacostea, *Captive Clio,* 196–201. Papacostea maintains that this period began in 1971 with the July thesis, but maintains that history was turned into a propaganda weapon; ibid., 201.

[137] Petrescu, *Historical Myths*, cit.; D. Petrescu, Cristina Petrescu, *Mastering vs. Coming to Terms with the Past*, 316–317.

connections and their positions at the Propaganda Department and the Museum of Party History.

As can be understood *from* the actions of Muşat and Ardeleanu, the competition was primarily between trans-institutional networks, for the appropriation in the first instance of an institution (for resources and positions) and then for the hegemony in the entire field. With this strategy, the duo succeeded, during the last years of the regime, in becoming far more dominant in the field than various directors of established institutions.

Instead, the institutions for historical research were not the main actors in the competition for resources; they collaborated for the common good – praising the Party, and praising Ceauşescu. In some cases, they were "headquarters" for one network, for example, the Institute of Military History for Ilie Ceauşescu, and ISISP for the veterans and propagandists, were two institutions fitting this picture.

ISISP, despite being a Party institution, was like all the other history-writing institutions *at* the mercy of these power networks. Compared to the other networks they assumed a defensive position, slowly evolving into subordination, since the other networks were much more in need of resources and positions, and therefore also more aggressive. For example, ISISP took part in the large-scale historiographical projects initially supported by the regime, but Popescu-Puţuri had little power against the decision of the Propaganda Section to quash the synthesis project in 1978. Another valid example is that ISISP's representatives had a very minor role in the 1980 World Congress of the Society for Historical Studies – a dramatic change in comparison to the extended goals of ISISP decided in 1966.

To my understanding, ISISP was bereft of main players in the power game. Old veterans and propagandists with history-writing tasks had probably limited understanding of the dynamics of the history-writing field, which were so distant from their daily office duties. Nevertheless, ISISP was not a safe place anymore. When ISISP was reduced in personnel due to its downgrading to a "small institute", its historians, feeling that their position was no longer secure, agreed to be individually co-opted for projects at the Centre for Military History and Theory, conducted unofficially by Ilie Ceauşescu, and by the Muşat and Ardeleanu network. At the same time, veterans and propagandists were less requested by these networks, since the competition was based on scholarly expertise. While for the historians ISISP was their main workplace, for veterans and propagandists it continued to be the only safe haven available.

In the mid-eighties, the whole institution was endangered. In 1985, Ceaușescu, planned to reorganize the entire range of institutions for historical research into one gigantic new institution. ISISP, according to the plan, would have disappeared, apart from 25 members of the personnel. Although the reason for this plan and for its abandonment are still not clear, it remains clear that the leadership no longer considered ISISP as essential for its plans, and since the draft of the plan was requested by Ceaușescu, it means also that he no longer valued the political support of the ISISP personnel. As a consequence, it would be possible to hypothesise that ISISP had chosen to endorse the new trends promoted by the main characters of history-writing in order to enter into the competition and save the whole institution.

It was in the eighties that Dacianist tendencies grew among some of the researchers, and even more so among its leadership. Popescu-Puțuri, Augustin Deac, and Nicolae Copoiu were among the most passionate neophyte Dacianists there since the mid-fifties (the archival evidence reveals), but it was only in the late seventies and eighties that their passion extended to the ISISP products. Still, it is difficult to establish whether Dacianism, protocronism and nationalism represented an institutional attempt to compete in the field or if the ISISP direction incorporated un-critically those features as Party duty, or sided with one or more of the informal networks for history-writing. Nevertheless, references to the creation of the Geto-Dacian state more than two thousand years ago, and Herodotus's quotes about the Dacians, became almost omnipresent in the ISISP monographs, and constitute some evidence of a trend that is still to be completely understood.

While competing for institutional survival, ISISP had to defend itself from the deviations from the canon which could put at risk the whole institution, preventing deviations and punishing them. The topic of Bessarabia is a good example of prevention: the historians were told not to develop any discourse on it without superior permission, in order to avoid creating problems with the Soviet Union. Therefore, ISISP spelled out what could or could not be developed according to the canon. Still, it is difficult to understand how Simion's book and Mușat's and Tănăsescu's collections of articles could be published. Apparently, when the ISISP leadership found that some collaborators had overstepped the set boundaries, drawing criticism from a competing network or even from a foreign power (as in the case of the Hungarian Ambassador), a scapegoat had to be found and

punished. Otherwise, ISISP might have been questioned and eliminated in its entirety for pretentious reasons, as Roller had been in 1958.

Praising the unlimited sovereign power incarnated in Ceauşescu was necessary for the networks of *culturnici*. Historians at ISISP increasingly took part in spreading megalomaniac theses about national history, striving to secure their positions in the intra-institutional networks, and to retain their access to the material resources and privileges handed out by the regime. Increasingly, both the ISISP direction and the Party leadership became fascinated by and enmeshed in the extreme forms of "wordless ideas" expressed in protochronism, Dacianism, and nationalism.

The leadership's enthusiasm for these ideas grew exponentially during the last decades of the regime,[138] encouraged by the higher propagandists, who instilled these variations of the canon into the cultural politics, seeking resources and positions. But the regime, as Katherine Verdery had correctly pointed out, had lost the ability to control the meanings produced by these variations,[139] as the case of Simion's and Tănăsescu's writings demonstrated.

But those were only the first sparkles of dissent. Mass education had been teaching for a decade to the young generations that the Party was the salvation of the nation, but it became increasingly clear that the regime was promoting only a fantasy of salvation,[140] while the economic and political situation of the country was telling a very different story. The intellectuals, as Katherine Verdery has considered, had an effective role in the disruption of the legitimacy of the regime. But how they did it voluntarily is questionable. Most probably, their contribution to national salvation was accidental, while the participation in the regime's plan is documented by archival evidence and by a large corpus of historical works.

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[138] Interview with Florian Tănăsescu via e-mail, 26th May 2014.

[139] Verdery, *National Ideology*, 314: 'The total effect of all these intellectuals constructing the Nation, either innovatively as with the protochronists or defensively as with the others, was that the national discourse subdued the Marxist one. The paradox is that it achieved its triumph on the initiative of the Party leadership and their protochronist allies, seconded (only) by those who opposed them. The groups in power adopted this once-hegemonic ideology-so potently instituted beforehand-in order to overcome it, incorporate it, and profit from its strength; they were overcome by it instead. Their use of national categories, […], garbled the sense of the categories of Marxism. The result was a gradual delegitimation of official, Marxism, whose chief victim became Ceauşescu himself'.

[140] Expression used by Vladimir Tismăneanu.

The afterlife of the Party History Institute
and its historians

This chapter addresses the short history of ISISP in democratic Romania (December 1989–February 1990), the position of the ISISP historians' network in post-communist Romania, and the destiny of their publications from the communist period. What happened to the ISISP historians and their books after 1989? By taking a closer look at the fate of this institution in those early days of change it is possible to observe the genesis of the continued legacy of communism in democratic Romania, to understand the passage of the communist elite into a new Romanian elite, and to understand the emergence of the deep divide that characterizes the present-day history-writing milieu.

In December 1989, the revolutionaries clashed the symbols of oppression: the Party symbol was ripped off the national flag, images of Ceaușescu and Elena Petrescu were burned together with Party propaganda materials, including the books published by ISISP historians. These books were actually at the centre of the fighting between the revolutionaries and the regime forces: *Securitate* gunmen barricaded themselves in the building of the University Central Library and fought there for three days against the revolutionaries. Around 500,000 books were lost in the ensuing fire, destroyed by the vindictive vandalism of the regime forces.[1]

After more than two thousand deaths and three thousand injured, the regime fell. Few days before the beginning of the Revolution, Georgeta Tudoran had finished her book on the international collaborations of the Romanian working class between the nineteenth and twentieth century. She

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[1] Rebecca Knuth, *Burning Books and Leveling Libraries: Extremist Violence and Cultural Destruction* (Westport-London: Praeger, 2006), 188.

succeeded in having it published by Editura Politică. But, when the book was to be inserted in the national book catalogue and distributed, the Revolution occurred, and her book was forgotten for many years.[2] The same destiny befell all the other Institute products towards the end of 1989.

The iconoclasm referred to earlier was not a matter of pure rage against the regime by a spontaneous angry mob. The Revolution destroyed the symbols of the regime and its propaganda book. At the end of 1989, the ideas that had previously been forbidden returned in Romania: a new publishing market was created. In 1990, while poor vendors in front of the Faculty of History were selling the old books, vestiges of the regime, a vast number of newly printed or cyclostyled pamphlets, flyers, books, and periodicals started to appear everywhere in Bucharest. Whether these cultural products were historical, journalistic, or simple denunciations against the past regime, they were nevertheless informed by the widest variety of ideas, encompassing the whole spectrum of Western ideologies, but also including ideas taken from orthodox religion. These ideas were supported ethically and financially by newly established networks, including parties, churches, associations, groups of private citizens, or former émigrés. They were offering what Tismăneanu has called 'fantasies of salvation': despite being focused on the past, these new mythologies were 'discourses about the present and especially [about] the future of post-communist societies'.[3]

One example of these 'fantasies of salvation' is the booklet by the Iorga Institute historian Mihail Opritescu, *1918–1947. Aceasta ne este istoria* (*1918–1947. This is Our History*). Printed in 1990, this book was distributed by the reborn network of the interwar National Peasant Party, the first Party to register its existence after the fall of communism under the name of the National Democratic Peasants' Party, in 1990. The booklet by Opritescu (48 pages in total) is a short compendium of Romanian history from 1918 to 1947. After forty years of conscription into the Party canon, history was again free, and together with it all the fantasies of salvation that one could imagine. In the booklet, the representatives of the monarchy, Iuliu Maniu of the National Peasants' Party, but also Armand Călinescu and Ion Antonescu were praised as saviours of the nation, as heroes which faced the

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[2] Georgeta Tudoran, *Problemele păcii şi colaborarii internaţionale în tradiţiile clasei muncitoare din România, 1877–1921* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1989).
[3] Vladimir Tismaeanu, *Fantasies of Salvation: Democracy, Nationalism and Myth in Post-Communist Societies* (Princeton University Press, 1998), 15.

calamities imposed by the international situation, while the communist takeover was presented as a violent act conducted by a sect of fanatics, who were useful puppets of their Soviet masters.[4] Later historiography would revise this general assessment, but the needs of the present required history to be summarised in the form of concise, clear myths.

Cultural products in general, and history-writing in particular, are the final results of the exigence of the present. No book would appear if nobody was paying for the whole assembly line that supports the writers, printers, editors, distributors, and so on. And, once a cultural product is distributed and everyone has received his/her share, the product is soon forgotten (only in the case of best-sellers does it continue to produce income). The poorly printed books of the 1990s, products of the efforts of idealists, were anyway backed by networks with financial resources. Since the Party that financed the whole cultural system was finished, the various Party institutions for culture were potentially over in the first days after the Revolution. The cultural products labelled "ISISP" were brought to an end – ISISP existed no more. Those books had the mark of the Party, which was demonized in Romania in the early 1990s. Therefore, they were burned, they were thrown away, or they were forgotten in the storage rooms of public buildings.[5] The books written with a focus on heteronomous principles, namely praising the leadership and the Party were harshly criticised and publicly ridiculed.

The focus of their authors, in 1990, was not on saving their ideas, but rather on saving themselves. Their condition of liminality in the 1990s did not allow them to present themselves with a strong identity – ISISP was decidedly a negative mark, closely associated with the Party. This explains why many of those historians chose to reinvent their professional identity. Their need in the present was to find a new position, and write new books, hoping that the past would soon become *forgotten*. Those vestiges of the communist past bore their name in print, but they were not useful visiting cards in a situation that was marked by uncertainty. Consequently, this put them in a liminal condition.[6] But, as will appear evident in the next pages, some of them were rescued by a surviving network from the communist times, in power as part of the National Salvation Front (FSN) and later on of the Social-Democratic Party (PSD).

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[4] Mihai Opritescu, *1918–1947. Aceasta ne este istoria* (Bacău: Întreprinderea Poligrafică, 1990).
[5] Pruteanu, 'Memoria comunismului', cit.; Knuth,188.
[6] Huddart, *Homi K. Bhabha*, 4–5.

New networks proposed new ideas and developed them through culture, having conquered political power. In February 1990, the Minister of Culture, Andrei Pleşu, transformed the old Editura Politică into Editura Humanitas, consigning it to philosopher Gabriel Liiceanu, his colleague and friend since the time of the Păltiniş School, the informal platonic academy gathered in the 1970s around the philosopher Constantin Noica, who had been exiled to the Păltiniş mountains.[7] During the first half of the decade, Humanitas was the leading force driving Romanian culture towards new sets of ideas, and could easily meet the market competition from amateur and artisanal printers and smaller publishing houses due to the entire structural system inherited from Editura Politică.[8]

While these new networks had influence at the national level, in the period immediately after the Revolution of 1989, the Party cultural institutions still formally existed. Cristian Popisteanu, charismatic director of *Magazin Istoric*, the popular history journal produced by ISISP, proclaimed the independence of the journal staff from Party dominance and praised the Revolution. This attempt to whitewash the responsibility of *Magazin Istoric* after two decades in the service of the regime was not welcomed by a former collaborator of the journal, Ştefan Andreescu.[9] He published a critical article in the popular political review *Revista 22* where he reminded the readers of the long-standing compromises between scholarly standards and the demands of the communist regime that had characterized *Magazin Istoric*. The "invitation" that Andreescu addressed to Popisteanu, 'Why don't you want to retract, Mr. Popisteanu?' represented very well the spirit that at that time pervaded the newly-liberated forces of society.

The new government of Petre Roman decided to close the Party cultural institutions and to initiate a process of restitution of powers to the state research centres, the Romanian Academy (under its original name) and the

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[7] Gabriel Liiceanu, *Jurnalul de la Păltiniş. Un model paideic în cultura umanistă* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2013). The transfer was made in parallel with the transformation of the Museum of Party History into the Museum of the Romanian Peasant, created by Horia Bernea who was also requested to lead the transformation by Pleşu. Petru Romoşan, 'La plecarea lui Horia Bernea' *Formula AS* (443/2000), available on http://www.formula-as.ro/2000/443/cultura-9/cultura-1908

[8] An aspect that Liiceanu does not consider in his account of the foundation of Humanitas. See Cristian Teodorescu, 'Gabriel Liiceanu, despre cum s-a nascut Editura Humanitas' *Cotidianul*, 30 March 2007. Available on http://www.9am.ro/stiri-revista-presei/2007-03-30/gabriel-liiceanu-despre-cum-s-a-nascut-editura-humanitas.html

[9] Ştefan Andreescu, *De ce nu vrei să te retragi, domnule Popişteanu?* [*Why don't you want to retract, Mr. Popişteanu?*], Revista 22, 16 February 1990, 9.

institutes amalgamated in 1970 to form the Academy for Socio-Political Sciences. For example, on 19 January 1990 there was a government decision[10] to dissolve the Academy for Socio-Political Sciences and constitute several new faculties of the humanities at the University of Bucharest (the faculties of journalism, psychology and sociology, and the school of political and administrative studies).

 Some days later, on 12 February 1990, a similar government decision closed down ISISP, in order to 'avoid parallelism in historical and socio-political research'.[11] This "parallelism" was obviously with the Iorga Institute. ISISP's library, estimated to contain about 90,000 books and 17,000 volumes of journals, was transferred to the Central University Library, while the archive of ISISP was moved to the Library of the Romanian Academy.[12]

Since communist regimes were toppled one by one between 1989 and 1991 in Eastern Europe, the demise of ISISP represents the second to last of the successive closures of Party history institutes, and the end of the "European branch" of this international network. With the fall of the Soviet Union and of its Institute of the Theory and History of Socialism (the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute) in November 1991, the headquarters of the international network had ceased to exist, together with the communist regimes' control of history-writing.

In Romania, elections were organized for appointing new directors of the cultural institutions: on 29 January 1990, Şerban Papacostea was elected new director of the Iorga Institute, succeeding to this after the twenty-year tenure of Ştefan Ştefanescu. Historian Ion Apostol remembers that Papacostea won the *election* by only a few votes, since former director Ştefanescu still had many supporters inside the Institute who voted for him.[13]

At the beginning of 1990, Ion Iliescu succeeded in saving parts of the communist network he was well familiar with, having previously worked at the Section for Propaganda and Agitation of the CC of the RCP, directly under the supervision of Leonte Răutu. Using the know-how acquired during those years, Iliescu succeeded in securing a network of allied intel-

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[10] Romanian Government, Decision n. 55, 19 January 1990.
[11] Romanian Government, Decision 136, 12th February 1990.
[12] Marian Pruteanu, 'Memoria comunismului. Fondul ISISP din Biblioteca Centrală Universitară din București' [library fund description], available on http://www.bcub.ro/cataloage/unibib/memoria-comunismului-fondul-ISISP-din-biblioteca-centrala-universitara-din-bucuresti
[13] Stan, Revoluția română, 186.

lectuals.[14] He even attempted to secure their positions in the Iorga Institute. In one of these attempts, Ion Ilieuscu and Mihail Drăganescu, president of the Romanian Academy,[15] tried to convince Şerban Papacostea, new director of the Iorga Institute, to employ the researchers of ISISP,[16] which was going to be closed.

Papacostea was rather astonished by the direct and 'impertinent' request: 'They wanted to send those people to the Iorga Institute!'. He told the secretary of Drăgănescu: '"please, deliver this message: I am stunned that one of their first concerns is to find a place for those people who contributed to falsify history, they do not have anything to do with an institute that follows the scholarly tradition of Iorga, of Brațianu, and so on"'.[17]

In the general history of ISISP, the decision of the Romanian government was the act that formally put an end to an institute that for 39 years had been central to the particular trajectory of Romanian historiography. However, despite the government decision, the president wanted to maintain the informal networks of former communist collaborators within the institutions of the new democratic Romania; Papacostea's reaction marked a clash between the informal network of ISISP historians and those involved in the renewal of the history-writing milieu:

> There were so many young researchers without affiliation. I preferred to admit those with potential capacity rather than open the door to these people, who have contributed – not all of them, but many – to falsifying [history] in the sense of Party conceptions, in the interests of the moment of the totalitarian Party, so I refused to receive them.[18]

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[14] Cristian Vasile, 'Ion Iliescu şi (re)scrierea istoriei', *Revista 22*, 16 February 2007, available online: http://www.revista22.ro/ion-iliescu-si-rescrierea-istoriei-3481.html

[15] Mihail Drăgănescu, vice-prime minister of the Petre Roman government at the end of 1989 and subsequently nominated president of the Romanian Academy. Before 1989, his merits in the field of informatics and his membership of the communist Party had given him important positions in the scientific field.

[16] Interview to Şerban Papacostea by the author, 7 February 2013.

[17] Interview with Ş. Papacostea by the author, 7th February 2013. The same account was provided to me by Paul Michelson: 'The call from Iliescu came while I was at Iorga for a commemoration program devoted to Benjamin Franklin. Papacostea was called out of the room during a panel discussion, returned a few minutes later. At the break, he related to me what had happened and told me with some degree of satisfaction that he had turned Iliescu down flat'. Interview to Paul Michelson, via e-mail, August 28th, 2015.

[18] Ibidem.

The executive order for closing down ISISP followed shortly afterwards, at the beginning of March 1990. The army sent several trucks to the headquarters of ISISP in order to secure the archive and the material goods of the institute.[19]

What actually happened to its historians? Florian Tănăsescu, former researcher at ISISP and at present vice-rector of the Spiru Haret University in Bucharest, emphasizes that the historians at ISISP were both researchers and activists. During the Ceauşescu era the task required of them was to produce scholarly texts, no longer pure propaganda, but at the same time the "old school" propagandists, mainly attached to the Propaganda Section, continued to be part of ISISP.[20] Since the young professional historians had chosen to serve the Party, they shared their destiny with the propagandists.

After 1990, the networks of culture of communist Romania were reformed. The first outcome of the great divide of 1990 was the disappearance of the propagandists from the history-writing field. As a *consequence*, the ISISP institutional ties between historians and propagandists were broken: those who had a professional education tended to distance themselves from the propagandists, stressing the substantial difference between historians and *culturnici*. The ISISP historians had several options. One was to request asylum, as group, from the Iorga Institute, where they had already been rebutted (as an institution) by "superior" order.

According to the testimony of Şerban Papacostea, Ion Calafeteanu relayed a collective request by several ISISP historians to be admitted into the Iorga Institute, but Papacostea steadfastly refused. According to Iorga researcher Apostol Stan, on 27 March 1990, after the Romanian Academy had taken over the institutions that had declared their independence from the Academy for Socio-Political Science, the steering board of the Iorga Institute confirmed the election of Papacostea as director. 'The request of a group of researchers at the former Party History Institute […] with the recommendation of the Romanian Academy to be taken into the cadres of the Iorga Institute was discussed', but the request was refused even at group level.[21]

This refusal was in line with the determination of Papacostea to end the influence of the former Party networks in the domain of history. Inside the

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[19] Viorica Moisuc, *Frânturi din viaţa unui bun prieten şi coleg – aşa cum am conoscut-o*, in Silviu Miloiu (ed.), *România în relaţiile internaţionale. Diplomaţie, minorităţi, istorie. In honorem Ion Calafeteanu* (Târgovişte: Cetatea de Scaun, 2010), 23–41, 24.
[20] Interview with Florian Tănăsescu by the author, via e-mail, 26th May 2014.
[21] Stan, *Revoluţia română văzuta din stradă*, 284–285.

Iorga Institute, in fact, there were historians who were considered, according to Stan, as 'morally incompatible' with the cultural authority that the Iorga Institute wanted to have in the new Romania; others, despite being 'worthy men […] had [during the communist regime times] to serve one and only one cause: to block or to pervert the publishing of original, non-conformist, and de-ideologized writings'[22] – that is, they had to obstruct the scholarly activities of the Institute. But since after 1989 the new network of "de-ideologizers" became hegemonic inside the Institute, the former regime's supporters could finally be stopped. The few supporters of the former regime, according to Papacostea, left the Institute after a few months.[23] For example, Ştefanescu left, since he still had his position at the University, and Florin Constantiniu went with him.

Due to Papacostea's opposition, the most prestigious institute for historical research remained unaccessible to the former ISISP historians. Among these latter, many understood that it was difficult and counterproductive to continue stressing their collective ties. Since their attempt to be accepted in the Iorga Institute as group was useless, they played their last card by presenting themselves at the Institute as individuals: after the failed attempt by Calafeteanu, 'they came individually, one by one, I don't know if all of them did but many of them came asking to be accepted on an individual basis, but I also refused this', Papacostea recounts.[24]

It is clear that the former ISISP historians were the losers in what Dragos and Cristina Petrescu have called the 'de-ideologizing turn [which was] supported by those historians who did not adhere to the idea of "national" history promoted by the communist regime […] as it was practiced under communism by regimented court historians who had institutionally dominated the profession'.[25] Since these historians clearly had a stigma – their former Party affiliation – this followed them in the new Romania, even at individual level. 'We have paid for the times in which we have lived', Ion Bulei told me.[26]

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[22] Ibidem.

[23] Interview to Ş. Papacostea by the author, 7 February 2013.

[24] Ibidem.

[25] Dragoş Petrescu, Cristina Petrescu, *Mastering vs. Coming to Terms with the Past: A Critical Analysis of Post-Communist Romanian Historiography, in Narratives Unbound. Historical Studies in Post-Communist Eastern Europe*, eds. Sorin Antohi, Balàzs Trencsényi, Péter Apor (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2007), 311–408; 312–313.

[26] Interview with Ion Bulei by the author, 12 February 2013.

But not all of them chose to passively accept the change. For example, Viorica Moisuc, who during the communist times was first employed as a researcher at the Iorga Institute, but who left it for the International Sector of ISISP, has criticized the way the de-ideologizers in post-communist Romania have portrayed ISISP. She maintains that the closure of ISISP was a mistake, since it was the only institute of its kind in the entire country.[27] Her attack against the Iorga Institute, appearing in an *ad honorem* volume dedicated to the memory of a former colleague, Ion Calafeteanu, is an attempt to present the new elites of historical research as 'revolutionaries in service'. Interestingly, here she spells out explicitly only the names of Şerban Papacostea and Apostol Stan. However, her argument is not only limited to demonstrating that their depiction of ISISP is ideological; she also links the Iorga Institute to Mircea Muşat and Ion Ardeleanu, claiming that one work prepared by ISISP was stopped by a negative *referat* by the Iorga Institute historians on the orders of this infamous *duo*.[28] Her narrative is also a valuable source of information on the destiny of the ISISP historians after 1989. Making reference to the last days of ISISP, she mentions in particular Gheorghe Zaharia, former vice-director, who 'as a real ship commander […] made certain that none of the employees of the Institute, from the gate-keeper to researchers, have remained "outside" [without work]'.[29] Moisuc herself continued to keep contact with her networks of former collaborators. Apostol Stan remembers that a few days after the closing of ISISP, she was taking part in 'a meeting of experts proposed by a military tribunal to analyse the damage to historiography done by Ilie Ceauşescu'[30] where 'the accusations of theft and plagiarism […] [were] sweetened [and] opposed by Talpeş, former employee of Ilie Ceauşescu, and by Viorica Moisuc'.[31]

Many former ISISP employees found their way into the new Romania by way of the Foreign Ministry: Ion Calafeteanu, former researcher in the International Sector, was appointed ambassador of Romania at the United Nations in New York until 1992; Ion Bulei was for a short period cultural attaché in Rome, before being employed at the University of Bucharest in 1992; Valentin Stan, who joined ISISP in 1988, also found work in the diplomatic environment, returning to scholarly activities in 1993. All the

[27] Moisuc, *Frânturi din viaţa*, 23.
[28] Ibid., 26.
[29] Ibid., 24.
[30] Stan, *Revoluţia,* 271.
[31] Ibidem.

historians mentioned (Bulei, Calafeteanu, Moisuc, Stan), and *others*, have found their way back to scholarly activities in Romania at top level positions. Calafeteanu, for example, became professor at the University Valahia din Târgoviște in 1995; in 1996, he became vice-director of the Accademia di Romania in Rome; and in 2000, he became professor at the Dimitrie Cantemir University in Bucharest.[32] Basically, it took him ten years to return to the centre of Romanian cultural life.

Some of them chose retirement, since one of the first initiatives of the Ilieuscu presidency was to permit early retirement. This move allowed a generational change in the institutions, and awarded state pensions to all those who had served in the communist system and had difficulties in finding new placements outside the Party sphere.[33] Among them was Georgeta Tudoran, who returned to her juvenile passion – painting. According to her testimony, in the aftermath of the Revolution she received a request to write for Romania Mare, the nationalist review launched in May 1990 by the former cultural elite of the Ceaușescu regime. She agreed to write for the review, but when the review in 1991 turned into a political Party, she refused to join.[34] The same was not true for Mircea Mușat, who was viewed by the entire community of historians as corrupt and "diabolic" after the fall of the regime: in 1992, he became a deputy in the ranks of Romania Mare and remained there until his death in 1996.[35] Viorica Moisuc joined this Party in 2004. She immediately found a position as researcher at the Institute for South-East European Studies of the Romanian Academy (1990—1997), then at the University of Costanța, and – like Calafeteanu – at the Spiru Haret University. One of their colleagues, Florian Tănăsescu, began his career at the Spiru Haret in 1990 and was in 2008 appointed vice-rector.

Their individual trajectories became so different, after 1990, that it is impossible to express a general statement about the presence of "ISISP historians" in post-1989 history-writing: they all continued their careers as individuals. Some managed to continue working on their previous topics

[32] http://www.centrulgafencu.ro/profesor-ion-calafeteanu.htm
[33] 'Permissive legislation practiced in the 90s allowed early retirement for persons approaching retirement age. In this way the state tried to "balance" unemployment expenses transforming potentially unemployed persons into retired persons/pensioners'; Amalia Elena Ioniță, 'Pension System in Romania – The Fundament of Social Insurance', *Buletin Universității Petrol-Gaze din Ploiești – Seria Științe Economice*, LVIII (3/2006), 87–92, 87.
[34] Interview by the author with Georgeta Tudoran, Bucharest, 2013.
[35] http://www.cdep.ro/pls/parlam/structura2015.mp?idm=210&cam=2&leg=1992

without interruption (like Bulei and Moisuc, for example), others changed their line of interest completely, like Olimpiu Matichescu, previously historian of the workers' movement and communist Party organizations in the interwar period – he wrote a book on the history of administration,[36] becoming the scientific secretary of a private university in Bucharest.[37] Another example is Ion Mamina who, from his position as head of the Special Collections of the Romanian National Library (1992–2005),[38] wrote several books on the Romanian monarchy,[39] a topic far from his previous professional interests at ISISP where had edited monographs on the workers' movement.[40] Together with his former colleagues Ion Bulei and Ion Alexandrescu, and the influential university historian Ioan Scurtu, Mamina also published general works on the governments of Romania before 1938[41] and encyclopaedias on the history of Romania.[42]

Among this network, Ioan Scurtu expressed on several occasions his opinion that the new deconstructionist turn in historiography beginning in the mid-1990s was a conspiracy by international superpowers to destroy Romanian national identity.[43] But this was an extreme position: ISISP

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[36] Olimpiu Matichescu, *Istoria administrației publice românești* (Bucharest: Editura Economică, 2000).

[37] The private university in question is the Romanian University for Sciences and Arts "Gheorghe Cristea", Bucharest, founded in 1990 and recognized by the Ministry of Education in 2002. Matichescu was its scientific secretary in 2002.

[38] Anonymous, 'Anul Carol I – Casa Regala a României în documente', *Revista Bibliotecii Naționale a României* XII (2/2006), 12.

[39] Mamina has published Ion Mamina, *Consilii de Coroană*, Editura Enciclopedică, București, 1997; *Monarhia constituțională în România: 1866–1938; Enciclopedie politică* (Bucharest: Editura Enciclopedică, 2000).

[40] Ion Mamina, Vasile Niculae, *Independența patriei: ideal și acțiuni ale muncitorimii române (1877–1918)* (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1977); idem, Partidul clasei muncitoare în viața politică a României, 1893–1918 (Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1983).

[41] Ion Bulei, Ion Mamina, *Guverne și guvernanți (1866–1916)* (Bucharest: Silex, 1994); Ioan Scurtu, Ion Mamina, *Guverne și guvernanți (1916–1938)* (Bucharest: Silex, 1996).

[42] Ioan Scurtu, Ion Alexandrescu, Ion Bulei, Ion Mamina, *Enciclopedia de istorie a României* (Bucharest: Meronia, 2001); idem, *Enciclopedia partidelor politice din România (1859–2003)* (Bucharest: Meronia, 2003); idem, *Enciclopedia partidelor politice din România (1862–1994) – Enciclopedie* (Iași: Tipo Moldova, 2010).

[43] 'Deconstructionism is not the result of chance, nor the idea of few isolated persons; it is rather a planned action that, under the pretext of demythologization, aims at minimizing and destroying national values. I want to stress that in the curriculum of Romanian history for the 12th grade […] the four pillars of our civilization are missing: antiquity, continuity, independence, unity'; Ioan Scurtu quoted in Bogdan Murgescu, *La storiografia romena negli anni novanta*, in *Oltre il nazionalismo. Le nuove storiografie dell'Est*, ed. Alfredo Laudiero (Napoli: L'Ancora del Mediterraneo, 2004), 131–151, 144.

historians never went that far. For some of their colleagues it was simply not possible to play a part in the new Romania. The ISISP leadership (Ion Popescu-Puțuri, Augustin Deac, Ion Ardeleanu, Nicolae Copoiu, and Gheorghe Surpat) no longer had any *relevance* in Romanian history-writing, being totally excluded from public life shortly after the Revolution. Some of them chose to emigrate, like Gheorghe Unc. For those of them who were not excessively compromised, a new beginning was still possible – but none of them had the safe position from which Scurtu could denounce an international conspiracy. Therefore, political agnosticism was the best strategy for many.

What remained of ISISP was the personal experience. The different destinies of the ISISP *historians* are not part of a shared collective memory: some point out that politics interfered with the historian's professional work (Bulei, T. Georgescu), others maintain that the responsibility for what they had written was individual (Moisuc), while others state they do not remember direct experiences of unprofessional practices imposed on their work (Tudoran, Tănăsescu). All of them present their work at ISISP as a positive, formative, and, most of all, *personal* experience, but nowadays only Moisuc and Tudoran defend ISISP as an institution, stressing its "unique profile" in the *Romanian* context (Moisuc), and its high scholarly profile (Tudoran).

Instead, most of Moisuc's and Tudoran's former colleagues have been fairly hesitant about taking a stand on ISISP after 1989. Gheorghe I. Ioniță, former researcher at ISISP in the 1960s and professor at the Faculty of History in Bucharest, did take a stand. In 1990 he was removed from his position as director of the Centre for South-East European Studies, and was readmitted to the Faculty of History only in 1993.[44] In recent times, he considered that in the days of the Revolution, 'many of those who constituted the cream of the country's intelligentsia discovered the pleasure of transforming the internal fights, despicable incidents among colleagues, into a way to assert their own value and legitimacy'.[45] A similar assessment on the change in regimes has been made by Florin Constantiniu: 'there's no debate on ideas, only conflicts among persons; those who try to discuss a problem are immediately suspected of wanting […] to hit someone'. He,

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[44] Ioan Scurtu, *Politică și viață cotidiană în secolul al XX-lea și începutul celui de-al XXI–lea* (Bucharest: Mica Valahie, 2011), 466.

[45] Ioniță, *O viață, un destin*, 176–177.

and also Moisuc and Scurtu, have compared the criticism of the old regime historians to the campaigns of 'unmasking' in the 1950s.[46]

It is difficult to say whether what historian Florin Constantiniu predicted, that is, that the name of the old 'serious researchers […] will appear *with* time'[47] became a reality; those who found new positions in the new Romania were those who did not compromise excessively with the regime on their profession. Despite the negative judgement of the community of historians on ISISP, some of its former historians managed to build careers both domestically and abroad.[48]

Since 1990, the version of national history established by the communist regime was questioned and deconstructed. But, as Bodgan Murgescu and Smâranda Vultur have pointed out, the efforts of the "de-ideologizers" were limited and they could not dismantle completely the national-communist canon.[49] Still, the new texts by Lucian Boia, Alexandru Zub, Alexander Duțu, Sorin Mitu, Sorin Antohi, and Bogdan Murgescu[50] have to some extent succeeded not only in confronting and critically assessing the volumes published under the communist regime, but also in making sense of history and its political uses during the nation-state era.

The reaction of the former hegemonic networks was strong. In 1995, the military historians, barricaded in the Army institutions for historical

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[46] Constantiniu, 443–444. According to Constantiniu, 'the main argument is based on personal discrediting: he is a dinosaur, a nostalgic of communism'; ibid., 444. Viorica Moisuc established the direct parallel between the post-communist culture and the Rollerism of the 1950s: 'I regret that we took the way back to the conception of Mihail Roller and of the "school" he created. Imitators of the former communist veterans became universal teachers in the promotion of the principles of anti-communism, of democracy, of Western culture' and so on; Moisuc, *Frânturi din viața*, 42.

[47] Constantiniu, 132.

[48] For example, Ion Bulei is presently professor at the Faculty of History at the University of Bucharest. He is most famous for his synthesis of Romanian history, which has been translated into many languages. See, for example, Ion Bulei, *A Short History of Romania*, 2nd ed. (Bucharest: Editura Meronia, 2013). Like Şerban Papacostea, he has very close relations with Italy, where he has published several works on Romanian culture.

[49] Murgescu, *La storiografia romena*, 138. Smâranda Vultur, *New Topics, new tendencies and new generations of historians in Romanian historiography*, in (Re)writing history: historiography in Southeast Europe after socialism, ed. Ulf Brunnbauer (Munster: LITVerlag, 2004), 236–276.

[50] Boia, *Istorie şi mit*, cit.; Zub, *Orizont închis*; Alexandru Duțu, 'Le "Annales", la storiografia rumena e il progetto "mentalités"' *Dimensioni e Problemi della Ricerca Storica* (1/1998), 125–138; Sorin Mitu, *Geneza identității naționale la românii ardelenii* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1997); Sorin Antohi, *Exercițiul distanței. Discursuri, societăți, metode* (Bucharest: Nemira, 1997). Mihail Bărbulescu, Dennis Deletant, Keith Hitchins, Şerban Papacostea, Pompiliu Teodor, *Istoria României* (Bucharest: Corint, 1998).

research that passed with almost no change from the communist to the democratic regime, attacked Lucian Boia in the media insinuating that his supporters were betraying the country, on the instigation of "obscure outer forces". These harsh tones were somewhat softened by the political victory of the opposition gathered around the Romanian Democratic Convention in 1996, and the general election of Emil Constantinescu as President of the Republic. However, this campaign restarted in 1999 when a history textbook that did not contain the "pillars of Romanian history" was published by Sigma Publishing House.[51] Sergiu Nicolaescu, acclaimed film director, and at that time senator for the nationalist Party *România Mare*, called for the public burning of this book.

When the Social Democratic Party (SDP) led by Ion Iliescu regained power in 2001, historian Ioan Scurtu became Iliescu's advisor on education. Scurtu, appointed director of the Iorga Institute, launched a grand project to write a new history of the Romanians in eleven volumes. Publishing started towards the end of 2001, but the first volumes ran into problems. In addition to evident cases of plagiarism, there were also illegitimate appropriations of cultural authority of deceased historians, whose contributions had been inserted in the project with no previous authorization.[52] It was a project with clear similarities to the 'great projects' on national history launched under the communist regime. Besides the clear intention to disqualify the efforts of the last decade to modernize, theoretically and methodologically, the history discipline, Scurtu and his clique were sending a clear message – while communism had fallen, the elite that had ruled Romania before 1989 was still present, and well provided with resources. This project, as well as other controversies that emerged in the early 2000s, were political messages, conveyed in a scholarly fashion, aimed at reassuring the networks and individuals formerly close to the Party that they had not been abandoned, and that the time for the *Reconquista* of the field had come.[53] This kind of historiography was re-legitimizing the

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[51] Sorin Mitu, Lucia Coipoeru, Virgiliu Țârău, Liviu Țârău, *Istoria românilor. Manual pentru clasa a XI-a* (Bucharest: Sigma, 1999) and idem, *Istoria românilor. Manual pentru clasa a XII-a* (Bucharest: Sigma, 1999). See also Observator Cultural, 'Un manual controversat: istoria pentru clasa a XII-a', *Observator Cultural* 99 (2000).

[52] Murgescu, 142–144.

[53] Ioan Scurtu, as vice-director of the Institute for the Romanian Revolution of December 1989, founded in 2004 by president Iliescu, succeeded in stopping the publication of the second edition of the review of the Institute, edited by Bogdan Murgerscu, since he 'did not know who the foreign authors are and, on the other hand,

history-writing of the communist times and its historians, and also bringing about a positive revaluation of the products of ISISP.

Providentially, in 2004, the accession of Romania to NATO and to the European Union forced Iliescu to institute an international commission on the Holocaust in Romania after he declared, in the summer of 2003, that no Holocaust had happened in Romania[54] . He also had to passively stand by as his successor in the Presidency, Traian Băsescu, instituted an international commission on the communist dictatorship (2006, the so-called "Tismă-neanu commission").[55] These commissions improved the legitimacy of the "deconstructionist" historians domestically, while giving them undisputed legitimacy at international level.

The struggle between different historians' networks in order to obtain resources still continues. In 2013, the public concourse for a teaching position at the Faculty of History included a list of works of study written by historians using a "deconstructionist" perspective, but also very ideological works by nationalist historians like Ioan Scurtu and Gheorghe Buzatu, and newly-printed books, like the ones of Larry Watts, that misinterpret both previous research and archival sources while striving to apologize the former regime.[56] In practice, while new networks were able to

the Romanian authors are not real specialists in the contemporary history of Romania'. Among the arguments used against the publication, the term "sultanism", used in one of the studies, was questioned by the publication committee since 'Romania was not an Ottoman province'. See Bogdan Murgescu, *Cuvânt înainte. 1989 – poveste unei reviste*, in Bogdan Murgescu, *Revoluţia romănă din decembrie 1989. Istorie şi memorie* (Iaşi: Polirom, 2007), 7–20.

[54] Iliescu declared: 'There was no Holocaust in Romania among the Jewish population'; Lavinia Stan, *Transitional Justice in Post-Communist Romania: The Politics of Memory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 117. Known as the "Wiesel Commission" from the name of its director, Elie Wiesel, the commission produced its Final Report in 2005.

[55] The presidential commission was led by Vladimir Tismăneanu, and its *Final Report* was published in 2006, with great political and scholarly clamour about its harsh assessment of the communist past – and also for showing the continuities between the RCP-NSF-SDP. The Institute for the Investigation of the Communist Crimes and the Romanian Exile was founded in 2007 as a government institute due to the Commission's input. See Zavatti, '"Historiography has been a Minefield". A Conversation with Vladimir Tismaneanu' *Baltic Worlds* 1 (2013): 10–13.

[56] Eugen Stancu, 'Naţional Comunism la Facultatea de Istorie?', *LaPunkt*, 5 February 2013, http://www.lapunkt.ro/2013/02/05/national-comunism-la-facultatea-de-istorie/ See also Eugen Stancu, 'Trecutul e în altă parte…experimente la Facultatea de Istorie', *LaPunkt*, 12 February 2013, http://www.lapunkt.ro/2013/02/12/trecutul-e-in-alta-parte-experimente-la-facultatea-de-istorie/ For the review of Larry Watts's book, see Cristian Vasile, 'Larry Watts şi Istoria centralizată a "eroismului" antisovietic sub Dej şi

impose their presence in post-communist Romania, old ones succeeded in resisting the change and in competing for resources in the new system.

Even though it is tempting to write that "still in 2016 political power continues to strive to control history-writing", this would be mere relativism. Instead, all the evidence indicates that the tendency to control history-writing is mainly an interest of the political inheritors of the former regime – implemented by cutting resources and forcing dismissals of scholars who are considered political adversaries.[57] A subtle form of control, but hardly a new one.

Ceauşescu', *LaPunkt*, 15 March 2013, http://www.lapunkt.ro/2013/03/15/larry-watts-si-istoria-centralizata-a-eroismului-antisovietic-sub-dej-si-ceausescu/   and   Dumitru Lăcătuşu, 'Fereşte-mă doamne, de prieteni', *LaPunkt*, 6 February 2013, http://www.lapunkt.ro/2013/02/06/fereste-ma-doamne-de-prieteni/

[57] In 2012 the Romanian Prime minister Victor Ponta removed Vladimir Tismăneanu from the direction of the Institute for the Investigation of Communist Crimes and Memory of the Exile; at the same time, Dorin Dobrincu was removed from the direction of the National Archives, and Horia-Roman Patapievici from the direction of the Romanian Cultural Institute. Zavatti, 'Historiography has been a minefield'.

Conclusions

Several questions have been posed in this dissertation concerning the relationship between power and history-writing. The history discipline has been considered one of the many modern products derived from the dissociation of power from knowledge. At the dawn of modernity, sovereign power separated itself from knowledge and allowed it to be framed into new systems of values, the scholarly and scientific standards, which were partially beyond its control. But unlimited sovereignty continued to constitute the core of the nature of power due to its economic control of the autonomous system of knowledge production. The history discipline was designed to produce autonomous knowledge, but it proved itself not to be very resistant to the temptations offered by political power. Heteronomy, as Bourdieu and Ash have pointed out, has been a much more common trait in scholarship in comparison to complete autonomy of ideas (which according to Gramsci are always political). Sovereign power, rather than neutrally supporting the system of scholarly values, offered resources and positions to those scholars that accepted compromise and could offer collaboration with its desired political projects. Political power in modern times, ultimately, is one of the actors in the field of history-writing, together with academia, even though its cultural capital is negligible. The goal of political power is to have the scholars accept and reproduce its narrative canon – the narrative that represents the sovereign power as the common good. In the European nation-states of the nineteenth century, these canons were created by historians in exchange for career advantages as a reward for their heteronomous approach to history-writing.

What happened to scholarship with the rise of the twentieth century dictatorships? Many scholars have pointed out the massive impact that Nazism, fascism(s), and communist dictatorships had on scholarship. Among the varieties of methods by which dictatorial power approached

scholarship, *control* is the trait they all had in common and that marked a qualitative difference from the previous semi-authoritarian nation-states. Mitchell G. Ash has considered that the relationship between political power and the academic disciplines continued to be mutually beneficial even under the Third Reich, with the scholarly community conserving part of its agency. This explanation enhances the mutuality of the relationship between *power* and scholarship, but the regime's mechanisms of control and imposition lose their relevance. My contribution has been to provide an understanding of the interplay between need for control by political power and the effective agency of the scholarly community, in order to catch the multiple, overlapping, overlaying, encrypted, complex dynamics and processes that characterized the forty years' history of this relationship within the framework of a communist system.

The choice of case study has been dictated in the first instance by curiosity. How did the History Institute of the Romanian Communist Party fit into the relationship between political power and scholarship, being the Institute so close to power, so well-known for its products, but at the same time so completely neglected by previous research? The questions driving this dissertation forward derive from that curiosity, to which previous research could not provide answers. The recently opened archive of ISISP, its historiographical production, the memoires of its personnel, and a set of ad hoc interviews provided the sources of this inquiry. The main question about the relationship between power and history-writing has been split into two analytical segments: first, the analysis of the interplay between political canons and scholarly standards and, second, the analysis of the causes and of the consequences of political changes on this relationship.

Using this framework, the informal networks inside and near the Institute appear effective in influencing the mechanisms of history-writing of the whole institution. Thinking in terms of networks it is possible to observe the conflicts within, around, and involving the Institute. Ultimately, changes in history-writing were still major consequences of the sovereign power's agency and of *its* Institute, but the networks were a constant active presence which influenced history-writing. My conclusions, presented in the next three sections, are framed as complex answers to the initial questions: I will consider the mechanisms of the history discipline under dictatorship, the networks' agency on them, and the *legacy* of the participation of scholarship to the regime's plans. The three sections are followed by short reflections on the limitations of the study, and possible future research.

10.1 History under *imperium*: changes and continuities

The mechanisms that regulated the relationship between history-writing and sovereign power in communist Romania were driven by the exigencies of the regime. For this reason, they have been understood in this work by analysing moments of change. When the Party assumed power in 1948, it did not have any wide support among the Romanian population. Marxist-Leninist discourse was completely alien to most Romanians, having been accustomed to state-sponsored national ideology since the nineteenth century: Marxism-Leninism did not possess *auctoritas* – that is, it did not constitute socially recognized knowledge. During the Stalinist period, 1948–55, the *potestas* of the Party was defended by the monopoly of violence – by *imperium*. Culture was based on dogmatic Stalinist tenets, and 'historiography became an annex to the Party politics'.[1] The ideology imposed by the regime was the only valid and recognized system of truth, since the regime recognized in itself the only way to the good of society (the Aristotelian common good). All other ideas, different politics of all kinds, were simply repressed. In this system of values, the Party did not use *potestas*, but rather Marxist-Leninist *auctoritas*. Therefore, no scholarly *auctoritas* was required; rather, the available human resources, veterans and propagandists, were the chosen ones who could develop the propagandist canon into a mimicry of history-writing.

After 1956, the de-Stalinization that began with the CPSU's 20th Congress meant a serious risk for Party secretary Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej and for the Romanian political elite, who reacted to the process of de-Stalinization playing out a de-Sovietization and retaining a basically Stalinist system of power, as Vladimir Tismăneanu has noticed. Katherine Verdery has maintained that from 1956 the mode of control of the regime changed: from control and repression to control and co-option. In this dissertation, I have shown how political power struggled in order to make Romania independent from the Soviet Union, by allowing a partial autonomy to scholarship. The goal of the historians and of the propagandists was to enhance the legitimacy of the Party and in order to preserve its core – sovereignty – in international as well as in national politics. Developing domestic and international legitimacy, I argue, was the the key factor for a weak power in order to survive in the context of unfavourable national and

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[1] Interview by the author with Șerban Papacostea, February 7, 2013.

international conditions. The eventual result of this process was national-communism. Hybridizing several components of national ideology in a Marxist-Leninist shape, the regime initiated a quest for becoming a societally recognized authority.

Among the available instruments, history has been considered by the Romanian communist regime as the most important cultural instrument for gaining legitimacy among the population. From a monolithic power which negated the value of scholarship, imposing its system of values to the former scholarly institutions, presenting itself as the Aristotelian 'common good' within its own canon, the communist regime now accepted and incorporated scholarly national elements into the political canon, in order to build a narrative which could preserve a sovereign core but which could validate its *auctoritas* in all circumstances, both domestically and abroad.

Since the system of truth produced by scholarship during national-communism was comprehended within a larger system of truth controlled by political power but mediated by various groups and interests' network, history became a variety of historical propaganda and present elite groups' representation, with elements of scholarship. Therefore, the final product of this mediation, the historical representation of the Party, was defined by the struggle between different competitors, for different interests, with different positions.

The historians, after years of disregard and neglect for their discipline, accepted to collaborate with the regime when they were offered the opportunity to provide scholarly contributions on national history. Traditional national elements developed by nineteenth century and interwar culture re-emerged as central topics. The subjects of study, and the arguments and theses, were elaborated by the historians but screened and scrutinized by high-level propagandists, who in turn operated under the surveillance of the leadership. The scholars returned to their positions. Scholarship was partially re-established; and so were its two principles of hierarchization, autonomy and heteronomy. The regime never admitted, during this period, to having renounced its own Marxist-Leninist authority, but in fact it partly did just that. Marx's and Lenin's ideological works were not very useful instruments in the quest for popular legitimacy – but once they became complementary to the resurrected national heroes, the regime had a double system of values by which it could enhance legitimacy and still be considered ideologically pure according to the Soviet standards. The historians were collaborating in this process in their quest for resources and

positions – with no complete autonomy, since the persistence of Party control made heteronomy compulsory.

The new historiographical canon was defined gradually from 1961 by a combination of scholars and propagandists who provided Gheorghiu-Dej with proper instruments in order to enhance legitimacy. Trusting the historians, Gheorghiu-Dej had recognized the expertise of scholarship in producing and revising the canon, still allowing veterans and propagandists to have some agency in creating the narrative of the Party.

Since the initial motion of the discourse on the nation in communist Romania was political, so was its evolution. As Tismăneanu pointed out, Ceaușescu, who succeeded Gheorghiu-Dej in 1965, oriented and regimented Romanian intellectual life and the community of historians towards a sort of Stalinism that was increasingly filled with a nationalist content and praise for the leadership. The gradual return to a Stalinist mode of control culminated in the mid-1970s, when the centralization of power in the hands of the leadership became almost total. The cultural sphere submitted completely to propagandistic interests. This trend continued until Ceaușescu's demise in December 1989.

By looking at the shift of the relationship between sovereign power, scholarship, and propaganda structures, three phases have been identified in the trajectory of the Ceaușescu regime. The first phase was short but was sufficient to upset the whole previous strategy: the new leader, in a search for legitimacy within the Party (1965–1968), empowered the Party cultural *institutions* and provided them with substantial resources. Autonomous scholarly knowledge was increasingly subordinated to the Party. By 1968, Ceaușescu had removed all internal competitors and achieved a considerable popular legitimacy. Therefore, no internal impediment was preventing the realization of a new *City of the Sun* in which history was simply a form of propaganda of the common good incarnated in the sovereign power. In 1970–1974, the incorporation of the autonomous state research institutions into the centralized Party organizations came as a natural consequence of those politics begun in 1965–1968. By 1974, the Romanian state was the Communist Party's state.

The shifts and turns of sovereign power have shaped the field of history-writing and its institutions with it, as appears from the evidence offered. Nevertheless, this explanation is partial. In particular, the absence of change in political strategy after 1974 requires a complementary explanation in order to understand history-writing in the years 1974–1989. This complementary explanation comes from the interpretation of the Institute's

history as the result of the interactions between Party goals and the struggle for resources and positions among the informal mixed networks of activists, veterans, and scholars that composed it *and* that present the image of the Institute and of the Party as a monolith with many fissures.

10.2 A monolith with many fissures

The narrative of the totalitarian Party-state which supposedly commanded and controlled everything was re-dimensioned and countered, in the present study, by considering the tensions present within the sublevels of the regime, which took the form of competition between different networks. The actions of individuals belonging to these networks were dictated in some cases by personal interest, and quests for material resources and positions of influence. The networks, which were unstable entities subject to sudden change, were thus used instrumentally, together with rhetorical devices of all kinds, in the power struggles within the Party. The plans of the Party were used instrumentally in the struggle for resources. The competitors did not strive to accomplish the Party plans, but rather to secure their own interests. These features made history-writing a dynamic field contended by networks with no stable grouping and constantly shifting Party goals.

Nevertheless, previous research presented by Vlad Georgescu, Katherine Verdery, Alexandru Zub and Apostol Stan have portrayed the Party History Institute as completely loyal to a supposedly monolithic Party, from its foundation in 1951 and until 1989. To be fair to these researchers, it must be said that they did not have the opportunity to closely scrutinize the internal dynamics of that rather special institution. In the empirical chapters I have provided evidence of the internal struggles that took place within ISISP, intertwining the history of its historians and activists with the history of the institution – both aspects were important for the redefinition of the field and for the trajectory of the history produced.

The networks used ideology and politics as tools for obtaining much more practical and tangible goals, or retroactively in order to create a non-existing polarization between Party loyalists and professional historians. For the Party, serving the profession according to the canon meant serving the Party itself. But the historians who served the Party were also in the service of their own interests. The scholars collaborated actively, not for the sake of furthering Marxism-Leninism, or for any kind of "patriotism", but for

power, resources, and positions, as Merle Fainsod noted already in the
1950s. Interestingly enough, the main critics of Fainsod's *How Russia is
Ruled* focused on its lack of interest in the bureaucratic, economic, and
propagandistic aspects[2] – obvious aspects of the façade by which Com-
munism presented itself. Certainly, there were many die-hard, convinced
communists who had faced the gaols of interwar Romania and the fascist
bullets in the Spanish Civil War. Nevertheless, the beliefs of those com-
munists were enacted in a context that did not exempt them from the
competition for resources. On the contrary, they had to use instrumentally
their ideas and identities, being ready to compromise with or even
relinquish their ideological purity, a matter that in the context of this
struggle would be tantamount to an ideological stubbornness that would
have led them and their families into serious danger.

Previous research has often and with few exceptions accepted that a clear
distinction existed between the activists, who made clear their choice of
side, and the historians who resisted communism from the inside. The
historians who have lived under communism are unanimous in indicating
this clear distinction. After 1989, Şerban Papacostea considered that there
was a clear dissension between historians and the Institute concerning the
forced infusion of propaganda into historical writings.[3] Alexandru Zub
maintains that '*professionalism* […] became a sort of *à la longue* resistance'.[4]
Vlad Georgescu, the pioneer of this field of study, showed implicitly the
divide between propagandists and historians by writing about the constant
rise of the former and the ostracization of the latter from power positions.
Another pioneer, Katherine Verdery, has maintained that defending the
profession meant, for the historians, defending the nation.[5] More recently,
Cristian Bogdan Iacob has argued against this dichotomy, considering it
misleading, since it obstructs 'the nature of the personnel changes within
the hierarchy of the historical front'.[6] I also find the distinction between
historians and propagandists highly dubious. The present study shows that
collective actors struggled to gain the upper hand in the quest for political

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[2] For the critics of Fainsod's book see, i.e., Philip Buck, 'Review of How Russia is Ruled
by Merle Fainsod', *American Slavic and East European Review*, 13 (3/1954), 439–440;
Leo Grullow, 'Review of Merle Fainsod's How Russia is Ruled', *Political Science
Quarterly* 69 (1/1954), 135–138.
[3] Papacostea, *Captive Clio*, 191, 198.
[4] Zub, *Orizont închis*, 77.
[5] Verdery, *National Ideology*, 232.
[6] Iacob, *Stalinism, Historians, and the Nation*, 154.

power and resources, often taking advantage of Party directives in order to eliminate adversaries and obtain desirable positions. Collaboration by the historians with some powerful activists was not an option, but rather a necessity that could easily be used for personal advantage. Once more, the regime was not quite as monolithic as it seemed, but rather characterized by inner tensions, leading to often unpredictable outcomes for individuals as well as for the Party plans.

As Bruno Latour has stated, the there are two possible roads to take in this kind of inquiry on groups and networks: 'either we […] begin our travel by setting up at the start which kind of group and level of analysis we will focus on, or we follow the actors' own ways and begin our travels by the traces left behind by their activity of forming and dismantling groups'.[7] I have chosen the second road. I have identified how individuals reacted to the changes imposed by the political changes. Furthermore, interpreting the grouping as subject to change allowed me to disregard the simplifying or mythologizing cathegorizations of groups and individuals that have been brought forward by the protagonists of these vicissitudes after 1989.

The analysis helped me to properly distinguish the agents of history-writing, their struggles, and their performance throughout the changes. I have presented some examples of how these networks succeeded in channelling Party directives towards their own goals, and I have shown that the failures of Party plans were often the result of the actions of these networks.[8] But, in the successive clashes and consequent victories of some networks and the defeat of others, the Party History Institute failed in its most important goal – no history of the Romanian Communist Party was ever published. What prevented the Institute from editing and publishing these historical syntheses was a mixture of political changes in the national and international political situation, together with the friction and inconsistencies between different visions of Party history among different networks and groups.

The dynamics of this Institute were highly inconstant, polycentric and sometimes deprived of their own autonomy, since they were constantly modified by political power and by a multiplicity of particular networks and groups that tended to define the work of the Institute. The development of the Institute often proceeded with uncertain and unexpected twists and

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[7] Latour, *Re-assembling the Social*, 29.
[8] Latour, *Re-assembling the Social*, 29.

turns following the political trajectory of the Party since, as Vlad Georgescu wrote, 'the entire cultural activity has made history the main element of […] propaganda'.[9] But in many concrete cases, the Party actually had very little direct impact. The Institute's changes were primarily due to inner tensions, often arbitrary and almost in complete autonomy from the master plans since, as Sheila Fitzpatrick has noted for the Soviet Union, 'bureaucracy acted in an arbitrary manner, minimally guided by law and only sometimes manipulable via personal connections. […] The gambling mentality […] was a direct antithesis of the rational planning mentality that the regime in principle approved and tried to inculcate in its citizens'.[10] In practice, some of the clashes inside the Institute were not directly connected to matters of high politics. But the purges enacted by the Party in search for ideological purity within its ranks deeply concerned the Institute's personnel. Separate individuals answered to these external solicitations by altering their self-representations and distancing themselves from the purged networks or groups. Consequently, networks and groups were dissolved very quickly and re-formed under other rhetorical strategies. Speaking with de Certeau, the practices of everyday life at the Institute were *tactics* adopted (and quickly dismissed if necessary) by the operating networks, in their attempts to survive the *strategies* of sovereign power.[11]

In moments of relative "stability", networks had fundamental relevance in defining the struggle over resources and positions. Officially, their struggle within the field of Party history-writing was for the good of Party history. For example, Mihail Roller and Clara Cuşnir-Mihailovici depicted their conflict as a conflict about ideological purity vs "professionalization", but it was in fact a struggle over the control of the Museum of Party History and its narratives. Party documents do not spell out whether the actions that the protagonists of these events performed were made "in order to" or "in consequence of". What I have presented here is my interpretation, which considers *networking* activites as fundamental both for defending positions and for winning over adversaries in the struggle for resources. The archival sources highlight that in moments of change the defence of endangered positions, and the consequent shift in the strategies of self-representation, became vital tactics. After Ana Pauker's network was

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[9] Georgescu, *Politica şi istorie*, 107.
[10] Fitzpatrick, *Everyday Stalinism. Ordinary Life in Extraordinary Times: Soviet Russia in the 1930s* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 218–221.
[11] de Certeau, xix.

crushed in the 1952 purges, some of her former supporters were able to survive and present themselves as members of the "good" group led by Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej. Previous research, as shown in the introductory chapter, has seldom questioned this grouping into "Muscovites" and "indigenous" communists, and has not acknowledged that this grouping was itself a strategy of representation rather than a matter of stable identities.

The works of C. B. Iacob, Stan Stoica, Andi Mihalache, Felician Velimirovici, Florin Müller have highlighted the agency of the historians in the passage from Stalinism to national-communism. Nevertheless, propagandists and veterans did not accept the change passively. After 1955, the conflicts within the Party History Institute were generated specifically by the defenders of the Stalinist civilization, a network centered on Mihail Roller, against the networks of the indigenous Party veterans and the educated Party propagandists. All these networks, which were extremely volatile in their consistency in terms of members and boundaries, struggled to defend their positions, using extremely varied means and methods. One notable exception were the veterans: while some of them were purged by the leadership in 1958, as a group they still succeeded to impose their symbolic capital. Their self-representation as a stable identity became part the official Party history, and the veterens thereby managed to keep important positions within the Party and at the Institute until the end of the regime.

Party politics constituted the *canon* that provided the actors with the right words, the right actions, and the right aim. What I have called "professionalization", was a policy endorsed by the Party to serve a double purpose: to allow the Institute to reach its goals in terms of history scholarship, while at the same time tightening Party control over it. It was also used instrumentally by competing individuals, groups and networks. Therefore, several different trajectories contributed to shaping the Institute and its historiography – and not merely the Party's need to establish an official historical narrative by exercising control over the Institute's personnel.

In the long run, these dynamics revealed the power of the networks and the relative weakness of the Party. In 1972, at the Institute, the local Party activists won out against an attempted Party-endorsed historiographical revision. The younger generation of national-communist historians were the actors the regime was now counting on. The leadership of the Institute encouraged them to write, under a pseudonym, two articles criticizing the old Stalinist historiography produced by the former Party History Institute. Despite the wish of the leadership to question the historical writings

connected to the abandoned canon, the veterans and the old propagandists actually succeeded in stopping the second article from being published. For the old activists, that revision would have meant to take the responsibility for those writings. However, the old activists fought back in the discussions that took place at ISISP, and reminded that those writings had been published with full approval from the Party. Faced with the matter of direct responsibility for the Stalinist history-writing, the higher propagandists eventually agreed not to upset the existing power relationships – and therefore decided to compromise on this matter.

This episode is particularly significant for understanding that interpretations of the past were haunting the Party and compromising its actions in the present. Still after many years, for example, the publications that indicated Stalin and Soviet Union as the saviour of Romania had not been publicly refuted nor criticized for their fanciful narratives. Similarly, the historical narratives that indicated Gheorghiu-Dej as the incarnation of Party purity, and which clearly conflicted with the political accusations levelled by Ceauşescu, had also not yet been openly refuted. This was due to the impossibility to distinguish between a pseudo-scholarly discourse and a political discourse, the general absence of any kind of explicit, properly scholarly historiographical revision, and the regime's perception that a historical revision was not easily implemented.

When the order came from the leadership, criticizing the old Stalinist canon and revising some essential narrative elements of the one elaborated in the early 1960s, this turned out to be more difficult than envisaged. When some of the new narratives written by the young historians put the older members of the crew in jeopardy, they simply indicated that the Party had always had the final decision on what the Institute published. Faced with this logic, the Party leadership accepted to moderate the intended historical revision.

At the same time, in order to survive, scholarly untrained propagandists and veterans did their best to follow the new historiographical developments connected to skewed versions of nationalism, particularly thraco- and dacomania, and protochronism. But when the new canon risked to return some legitimacy to the fascist dictator Ion Antonescu, the veterans once again succeeded in halting the process. Thracomania, dacomania, and protochronism started at the end of the 1970s as literary trends and eventually became the most rewarding historical narratives for the networks in search of recognition from the leader and his close family.- In the 1980s, ISISP's importance diminished, becoming reduced to the status of a "small

institute". It was still aimed at serving Party politics but in practice it continued to be at the mercy of several powerful networks, particularly the ones connected to Muşat and Ardeleanu, to Ilie Ceauşescu, and to I. C. Drăgan. Those main competing networks became the driving force of history-writing in late Romanian communism, of which the Institute and its historians could not be more than modest followers. After 1989, the first two were discredited for their negative contribution to the history-writing milieu and their vilification of the scholarly institutions. In contrast, the Centre once led by Ilie Ceauşescu survived, since it belonged to the Army, and its historians could maintain their positions.

The regime was not omnipotent when faced with these struggles. Although the field of history-writing was controlled by the Party, the tactics that the actors of the field adopted made history a dynamic and unstable field, with unstable grouping. The quest for resources and positions was therefore accompanied by clashes with other networks. In conditions of political stability, networks clashed over resources; in a condition of change, they had to readapt and hide or highlight their recent history of networking according to the circumstances.

In general terms, the Romanian communist dictatorship had a long-lasting negative effect on the field of historical sciences. But the Party plans would have achieved nothing without the active participation of thousands of individuals, networks, and groups, all in search for resources and positions. These categories used instrumentally the numerous successive reforms of the Institute, trends of professionalization, and political purges, as means of personal ascension. Therefore, the whole set of conflicts and tensions present among the actors involved contributed to the making of a Romanian communist historiography.

10.3 Compromise: co-option and participation

The condemnation of Romanian communism as criminal,[12] a condemnation which goes *per extensione* to the regime's sub-units and Party

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[12] I am referring to the Presidential Commission for the Study of Communist Dictatorship in Romania, *Report*, 2006, retrievable on http://www.presidency.ro/static/ordine/RAPORT_FINAL_CPADCR.pdf on February 1st, 2011. I have already discussed the Report and the discussion that it generated in Romania in Zavatti, *Comunisti per caso*, 260-266. My conclusion is that, while the Report is a very good starting point for

officials, sets a clear line of interpretation of past events (and a straight line of action for the future: "never again!"). With this paradigm in mind, it is hardly surprising that no-one is eager to open the Pandora's box of the complexities of the communist regime. This could mean admitting personal and collective responsibilities, while a move towards an open reconciliation with the past is combined with the risk of being condemned. With the criminalization of the communist regime, all scholars – Party as well as non-Party - would be guilty except for those who clearly resisted the regime, while refusing any kind of professional position or substantial advantages. But few were in condition to do so.[13] Taken to its extremes, the paradigm would condemn the majority of those who had to interface with the Party *for* professional reasons, including the accountants.[14] Recently, the traditional paradigm *compromise vs. resistance*[15] elaborated by Verdery has been revised by Ioana Macrea-Toma in *opportunism vs. dissidence* (as paraphrased by Cristian Vasile).[16] In this work, consideration has not been given to resistance or dissidence, but to the active participation in political projects that required a degree of trust by the Party.

This participation was common to untrained activists and educated historians. Very few could escape the system. Some chose to embrace it fully; others wanted to fulfil their aspiration of scholarship, *since* nobody knew communism would end. And, if communism was the condition of the present, while resistance was vain, to work as a scholar side by side with untrained propagandists and under the banner of the Party was the only

the analysis of the communist dictatorship since it succeeded in forcing public opinion to come to terms with the past, a clear bias is the political intent by which it was generated, since it was commissioned by President Traian Băsescu in order to attack his adversaries by scholarly means.

[13] The example of David Prodan offered by Katherine Verdery is meaningful when understanding the characteristics of someone who had the possibility to never compromise: 'no children, himself and his wife retired, minimal ambitions for travel'. Verdery, *National Ideology*, 252.

[14] I am referring to the film *Au fost sau n-a fost?* by Corneliu Porumboiu (2006), where a TV-program promised the audience to unmask former collaborators of the *Securitate*, but only succeeded in unmasking an accountant who, in his defence, stressed the obvious – that all kinds of regimes and organizations need accountants.

[15] Verdery, *National Ideology*, cit.

[16] Vasile, *Viața intelectuală și artistică,* 18. As Macrea-Toma explained: 'The understanding of resistance as exclusively cultural, as also […] the lack of organized political action need new kinds of questions […] and theoretical tools in order to reduce the roughness of a confrontational discourse, operating with monolithic blocks: writers vs. censorship, literature vs. ideology, resistance vs. evasion'; Ioana Macrea-Toma, *Instituții literare*, 7.

possibility if one wished to obtain resources and positions, even though the regime benefitted from the prestige of the scholars' cultural capital.

Romania had a very limited number of anti-communist dissidents. Nevertheless, it should also be remarked that networking was (and still is) a common practice that substituted (and still substitutes) for the dysfunctions and the bureaucratic absurdities and abusiveness of the Romanian state. With a powerful protector, or with a network of allies, the chances of avoiding the Party-state dysfunctional bureaucratic institutions' procedures of resource allocation were higher: everything worked through the power of informal networks, while official ideology was a mere rhetorical apparatus for keeping control. Ordinary persons needed contacts with one or more influential patrons – for defending and, possibly, improving their positions, which could be endangered by sudden political changes. In practice, net-working was the de-politicized substitute for dissidence – certainly it was much more rewarding – but it carried with it the acceptance of the political *status quo*, and a stigma for those who collaborated more closely to the Party.

During communism, the personnel at the Party History Institute / ISISP were considered unreliable in terms of scholarship by the Academy historians due to their proximity to political power, and this influenced their individual professional relationships with other historians. All the advantages conferred by the Party History Institute made it a very particular workplace, privileged but at the same time full of restrictions. ISISP his-torians and propagandists had privileged access to literature, archival sources, and publishing opportunities. Proximity to political power also meant proximity to financial resources and other sorts of material benefits such as access to special shops, hospitals, and clubs. Furthermore, on many occasions the daily work duties of the ISISP personnel were performed quickly, as Party orders, as encumbrances – while the historical works produced for external, scholarly – or politically – valuable commissioners constituted an individual career opportunity. In order to access the material prosperity offered by the Institute, networking was an essential activity. In fact, while officially recruitment was decided on by the Institute leadership, in practice it was much more informal and based on networking.

Those who were chosen or agreed to work at the Party History Institute were required to perform their profession according to the Party narrative canon, in order to strengthen it with new scholarly products. Some of those who worked there were entrusted with the crucial adaptation of the Party desiderata into the meta-narrative canon. The scientific council of the Institute, composed of high-level propagandists and top-level historians,

had the task of adopting the Party's political views of the moment into the mandatory canon, thereby revising its scholarly production, and to develop it in all historiographical products. At the same time, the Propaganda Section and the direction of the Institute divided the labour of the historians, archivists and librarians employed so that they could better serve the standardization of the canon. For example, the top-level historians and propagandists decided on fundamental matters such as the periodization of Party history, and consequently divided the sectors of the Institute into periods and subjects of study, taking care of the most sensitive historical topics that were used as a means of definition in the conflicts at international level (e.g. with the Soviet Union, but also with Hungary).

The main elements by which the Party determined the range of its personnel were, once again, a mixture of Party rules and network interests. There were, of course, extra-professional dynamics that defined the success of this or that Party historian/activist. Unsurprisingly, many historians who recalled the beginning of their career at the Party History Institute neglect or omit any possible Party loyalty and view their collaboration as a consequence of their quest to acquire a good scholarship opportunity. For example, the whole narrative of Titu Georgescu is aimed at distancing him from the communist regime, and at creating a juxtaposition between the professional historians and the Party – a dichotomy that is actually negated by archival evidence. Georgescu succeeded in establishing himself in high positions of the regime, and was able to form a whole school of pupils at the Institute at the end of the 1960s.

From the 1960s, the historians, as well as other categories of intellectuals, participated actively in the strategy of the regime. Cristian Bogdan Iacob insists on the "co-option" of the intellectuals by the Party, without indicating what precise meaning he attributes to this concept. "Co-option" describes the passive state of being controlled or forced, while "participation", which I prefer, indicates the agency of the intellectuals in the Party plans and their execution. Previous studies, as well as memoirs, tend, first, to see the Party historians' actions as a direct consequence of Party decisions, and second, to create a very much idealized and mythical dichotomy between supporters of the "nation" and those of the "Party". Even if this story of Romanian intellectuals under communism has been described

as a narrative of compromise/servitude and resistance,[17] the trigger that moved the protagonists in the depicted events was the *active participation* in the regime's plans. The actors of this narrative are not "the Party", or "the historians", or "propagandists", grouped as such. Rather, a few powerful individuals, mixed networks and self-established groups participated in the same kind of cultural projects in constant dialogue, seeking with the leadership a mediation between their multiple interests and Party aims. Since they all drew from the same pool of resources, the competition was inevitable. This story gravitates around the struggle for resources and positions rather than around the clash of mythical, or ideological constructs or between different memories and groups' experiences, which were used instrumentally both at that time and *post hoc*, after 1989.

In this sense, recent history, after the decisive change in 1989, became a very divisive subject in present-day Romania. There is a distinct divide on macro-topics such as the condemnation of communism and the attribution of responsibility for the communist past as a whole, while collective memories and groups' experiences are mixed together with still-existing functioning networks. All these dynamics are still present. Some of them are invisible to external eyes, but many aspects of the past are still very much part of the present society. While the past is indeed a foreign country, its persistency is palpable: the scars that it caused still hurt in the present, and they will continue to hurt until there is no memory of them. Perhaps, this has been the most durable and humiliating contribution that an unlimited sovereignty has left for Europe and its people.

10.4 Limitations of the Study and Future Directions of Research

Despite the general limitation imposed by the absence of complete sets of information on the networks and groups present in and around the Institute, a more general issue has been excluded from the present study: the international role of the Institute. The Institute was a politically relevant crossroads of scholarship and diplomacy, at international level. The

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[17] Verdery's *National Ideolog under Socialism* has been translated into Romanian with the title *Compromis și resistența* (compromise and resistance); less accommodating has been Zub, *Orizont Închis*, 91–101; Zub replaces 'compromise' with a much stronger word: 'servitude' (*aservire*, 165).

international, institutional network of this Institute was composed of the history institutes of the other communist parties around the world and, in the Western countries, of institutional actors that, for a set of different reasons, were interested in keeping contact and organizing common works with ISISP.

Nevertheless, the direction chosen for this study is limited to analysis of the dynamics concerning the relationship between power and history-writing inside one institution. The struggle for resources, which is central to this study, was better seen in the internal dynamics, rather than in the international ones. Shifting the focus from the struggle for resources but keeping the network perspective, the method I adopted can provide an understanding of the activities of the international institutional relationships of the Party history institutes and their transnational dynamics, making possible to depict the full range of relationships that these institutions had, proceeding to redefine the history of history-writing and considering the relationship between scholarship, diplomacy, and networking from a transnational perspective.

The "fraternal" institutions (as they are indicated in the documents of the ISISP archive) were very similar to ISISP. In them were present the same dynamics indicated in this study on the Romanian case (canon vs. standard, heteronomy vs. autonomy, strategy vs. tactics, struggle for resources, networking, grouping, patronage/clientele, etc.). As I have indicated, Romania has often been in conflict with foreign countries over historical issues. Nevertheless, the international network of the Party history institute continued to exist uninterruptedly between the end of the Second World War and the end of the Cold War. Therefore, a step further in the investigation of the relationship between power and history-*writing* is to analyse its transnational dimension, which included matters of diplomacy (internationalism vs. national interests) as well as the tensions already indicated in this study.

10.5 Concluding remarks

Scholarship under communism was characterized by the presence of mechanisms of repressive control and rewarding participation. Despite these mechanisms, which reduced history-writing to the mere accomplishment of sophisticated propaganda in a scholarly form in a general context of de-professionalization of the discipline, educated historians participated,

alongside Party activists and veterans untrained in history, in the struggle for resources, positions, and privilege. The tactics adopted by the individuals in order to improve their position was networking and, for those who could use their symbolic capital, grouping. Rather than for "the common good", this mixed milieu of historians and Party activists were striving to improve their positions by producing various, heterogeneous historical writings that could give them visibility to their patrons and the leadership.

Both the mechanisms of control and the network practices contributed to the functioning of the dictatorship in Communist Romania. *But* both easily existed independently from each other. Even the democratic states born after 1945 in Western Europe and in 1989–91 in Eastern Europe have continued to keep their grip on history-writing by their economic power.

Since the struggle for resources is a neverending story, historical truth and professionalism are up for negotiation, no matter what political system the history-writers live under.

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In 1990, the Institute for Historical and Socio-Political Studies of the
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the Party History Institute) was closed. Since its foundation in 1951
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Party on the history of both the Party and Romania.

This book is dedicated to the study of the Party History Institute, the
history-writers employed there and the narratives they produced.
By studying the history-writers and their host institution, the his-
toriography produced under Communist rule has been re-contextu-
alized. For the first time, this highly controversial institute and its
vacillating role are scrutinized by a scholarly eye.

Francesco Zavatti is a historian at Södertörn University, Sweden,
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(CBEES) and the School of Historical and Contemporary Studies.